

New Beginnings

A Student's Guide to Navigating



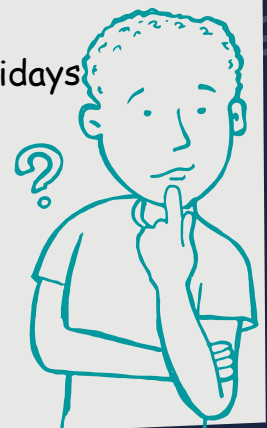
GALWAY

EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Welcome

This is a very exciting and busy time as you start on the newest chapter of your life. The information in this booklet should help you to manage your transition into post primary school. Starting secondary school might not always be easy, but it will be such a worthwhile and important time of growth and development in your life. Learn as much as you can, work hard, and try your very best to enjoy every moment.

This is a '**Transition booklet**' and you can use it both at school and at home. It will hopefully explain a lot about secondary school and answer some of your questions as well as help to prepare you for all the exciting changes ahead.



The School Day



Our school day at Galway Educate Together Secondary School starts at 8.30am. On **Mondays** and **Wednesdays** we finish at 3.40pm. On **Tuesday**, **Thursday** and **Friday**, school finishes at 2.30pm. Each class lasts for 1 hour, except for tutor which is 15 minutes each morning. We take a **15 minute break** at 10.45am and a longer **lunch break** at 1pm for 30 minutes. You will have a slightly longer lunchtime of 40 minutes on a **Monday** and **Wednesday**.

Duration	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
15 mins	Tutor	Tutor	Tutor	Tutor	Tutor
1 hour	Class 1	Class 1	Class 1	Class 1	Class 1
1 hour	Class 2	Class 2	Class 2	Class 2	Class 2
15 mins	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1 hour	Class 3	Class 3	Class 3	Class 3	Class 3
1 hour	Class 4	Class 4	Class 4	Class 4	Class 4
30/40 mins	Lunch (40 mins)	Lunch (30 mins)	Lunch (40 mins)	Lunch (30 mins)	Lunch (30 mins)
1 hour	Class 5	Class 5	Class 5	Class 5	Class 5
1 hour	Class 6	Clubs	Class 6	Clubs	

The School Day

Your Timetable



Your Timetable

One of the first pieces of information you will be given in September will be your timetable. It can look a little confusing in the beginning, but that is because it contains a lot of useful information; once you understand it, it will be easier to read.

Your timetable is very important because it not only tells you which lessons you will have that day but it also gives you a clue about the equipment you will need to pack in your bag the night before. It also tells you what time each lesson starts and finishes and in which room they will take place. If you haven't got a watch yet, it might be a good idea to buy one to practice telling the time and getting to places on time. There will be a clock in every classroom if you don't have a watch.



Stick a copy of your timetable on your bedroom wall at home as well as in your locker and journal at school. This will help you to be more organised.

The School Day

Your Timetable



Usually the timetable will also let you know which teacher you will have for each subject. Instead of just one teacher, you're going to have to get used to five or more different people being in charge of your class! Often, the timetable will have the teacher's name under the name of the lesson or room number. You can see where your teacher's name would usually be found in the sample timetable above, written in green.

You will probably have 5 or 6 different subjects every day and some will be in special rooms. For example, Science will take place in the lab and Art will take place in the Art Room. You can see where the room name/number for each subject would usually be found in the sample timetable above, written in purple.

Following the timetable will help you to stay organised.

The School Day

Your Timetable

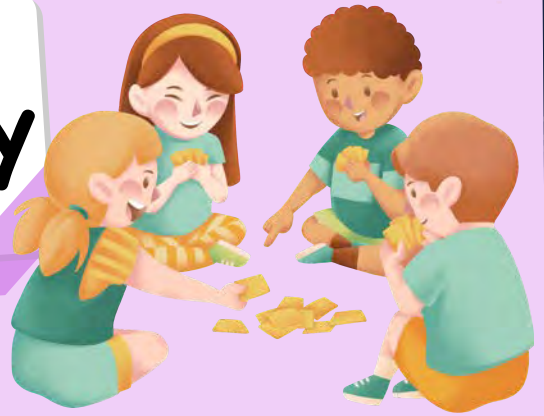


Below is a picture of what your timetable might look like:

	Tutor	1	2		3	4		5	6
Monday	8.30 – 8.45 TUTOR	8.45- 9.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	9.45- 10.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	15 min BREAK (10.45- 11.00)	11.00- 12.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	12.00- 13.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	LUNCH (13.00- 13.30/13.40)	13.40- 14.40 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	14.40- 15.40 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER
Tuesday	8.30 – 8.45 TUTOR	8.45- 9.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	9.45- 10.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		11.00- 12.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	12.00- 13.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		13.30- 14.30 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	
Wednesday	8.30 – 8.45 TUTOR	8.45- 9.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	9.45- 10.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		11.00- 12.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	12.00- 13.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		13.40- 14.40 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	14.40 - 15.40 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER
Thursday	8.30 – 8.45 TUTOR	8.45- 9.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	9.45- 10.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		11.00- 12.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	12.00- 13.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		13.30- 14.30 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	
Friday	8.30 – 8.45 TUTOR	8.45- 9.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	9.45- 10.45 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		11.00- 12.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER	12.00- 13.00 SUBJECT ROOM NO. TEACHER		13.30- 14.30 SUBJECT TEACHER ROOM	

The School Day

Clubs



Clubs

Extra-curricular clubs are an extremely important part of our community here at Galway Educate Together Secondary School. Getting involved in school activities outside of regular class is not essential, but it can make settling into your school a lot more fun. It is a great way to meet other students who have similar interests and it is an easy way to try new things. You will be given the chance to suggest clubs that you would like to see running in the school through our student voice program. You will then have the option to attend the club of your choice.

Most clubs run on a Tuesday and Thursday after school for an hour but there are some clubs running at lunchtimes during the week also. It's a great way to get to know other students while having fun.

The School Day

Clubs



Below is a list of the clubs that are running in our school currently

Tuesday After School Clubs 2.30 – 3.30pm

Home Learning Club LS1	Musical Rehearsals and Set work- Back to the 80's	Debating Club with Rowie and Elana LS5	Boys Basketball Training – Meet at Sports Hall - Martin	Coding/Robotics/Minecraft Club With Peadar in Tech room	Soccer Training – meet at Sports Hall – Gary, Laura
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Thursday After School Clubs 2.30 – 3.30pm

Home Learning Club LS1	Musical Rehearsals and Set work- Back to the 80's	Arts and Crafts Club with Donna and Paula – Home Ec Room	Dungeons & Dragons Club with Matthew in LS6	Girls Basketball – Rowie and Leanne Volleyball – James and Hazel Tabletennis - Evan	Science Club – James – Blue Lab Yoga - Gabrielle
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Lunchtime Clubs

1. Each lunchtime – Games Club & Chess Club LS8 with Matthew/ Library LS9
2. Monday – Lego League with Evan and James in the Tech Room, School Magazine Club – With Esther and Orlaith in LS2, Green Team with Clodagh in LS4
3. Wednesday – Languages Club with Karin LS1
4. 1st Year Buddy Lunchtime with Ann Marie & Katriona – details to be confirmed
5. Pride Club with Richard – day to be confirmed
6. Lunchtime Walking Club with Katriona/Ann Marie – Tues/Wed/Thurs 1.10

Registers will be taken by teachers at each session. School bus will leave school at 2.30pm so you will need to arrange another way home if staying for a club.

Meeting point for all Sports clubs is in Sports Hall.

No clubs on days when there is a Staff meeting or Parent/Teacher/Student Meeting or School event

The School Day

Attendance and Punctuality



Just like in primary school, students need to attend school every day unless the absence is unavoidable. Coming to school every day promotes a positive environment for learning and personal development. It also enhances each student's ability to achieve their full potential. If you do miss a day, your parent/guardian must explain the absence using the school app.

Students also need to arrive to school and classes on time every day. In addition to being essential for the efficient running of the school, learning to be on time is an important life skill. Remember that at GETSS, there is no school bell to let you know when school or class has started or finished. The school opens at 8am and school begins at 8.30am. If you arrive after 8.30am you will need to sign in using the tablet in the office. The main door may be locked and you must then use the buzzer to get into the school. If you are going to be unavoidably late to school, your parent/guardian should let the school know using the school app.

Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours without permission. Any student who wishes to leave the school early must have permission granted by their parent/guardian in advance, via the school app. When the student leaves, they must sign out using the tablet in the office.

Finding Your Way



Most 6th class pupils feel a little nervous about going to a school which is different or bigger than their primary school. They might feel worried about getting lost, or being late for a lesson because they're not sure of where the room is. The first thing you need to know is that you will rarely go anywhere alone, most of your classes will be with the same people. For this reason, it is less likely that you will get lost.

Remember that if you are unsure of where you're going that you check the door to see what room number you are at, look at the school map or ask a teacher or another student for help.



**QUICK
TIPS**

Before you leave your class, check your timetable to see where you are going to next. This will make it easier to find your way around.

Finding Your Way

Our school is in Galway City Centre



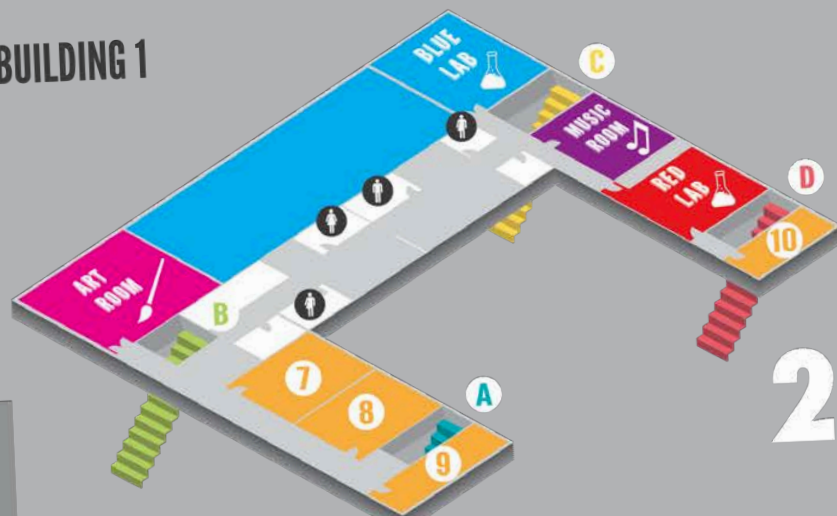
Yard



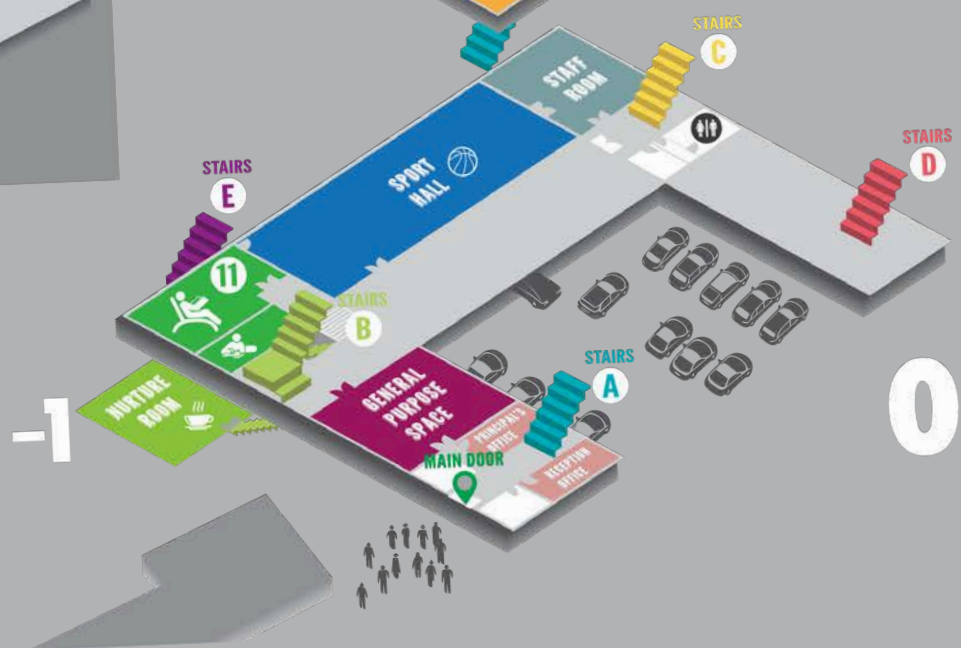
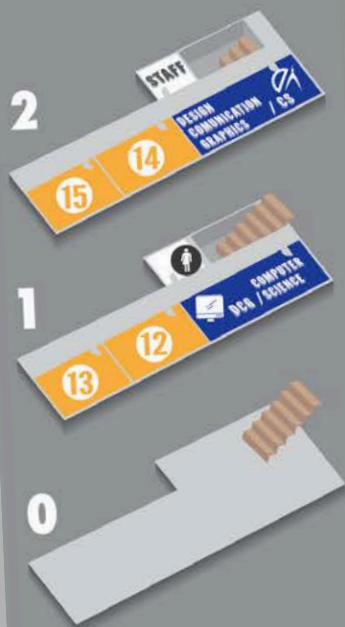
Sports Hall



BUILDING 1



BUILDING 2



Finding Your Way

Classroom Layout



There are many classrooms in post primary schools and it is no different here at GETSS. We call our classrooms 'Learning Spaces' (or LS for short) which are numbered from 1-6. You will see signs on the classroom doors, like the one pictured below, letting you know which learning space number that room is.

We also have a Music room, Art room, Science lab, Home Economics room, Technology room, Computer Science room and Graphics room. The layout of these rooms looks a little bit different than the other learning spaces, as these subjects require more materials and equipment.

For each subject, students will be assigned a particular seat, as we follow seating plans here at GETSS. You will have a different seat in each learning space, which you will be assigned on your first week of school. Because you will move rooms for your option subjects, it means you will get to sit beside different people in different classes. This is a great way to get to know other students who may not be in your main class.



Finding Your Way

Classroom Layout



Tech room

Home Economics room



Science lab



Music room



Art room

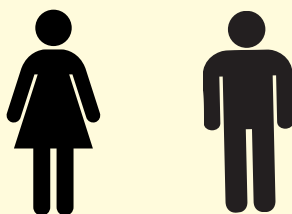


Finding Your Way

Toilets



There are many different toilets to choose from around your new secondary school. In the main building, you will find boys' toilets and girls' toilet on the second floor. You will also find a girls' and boys' toilet in the new building. These toilets will have the following symbols on the doors - one for **girls**, and one for **boys**



There are also gender-neutral bathrooms on the first floor of the main building and in the new building. Everyone can use these toilets. The symbol for these toilets will look like this:



It is important to always wash your hands after using the toilet. This helps to keep our school safe and hygienic. When drying your hands, you must ensure that the paper towels are put in the bin and not flushed down the toilet. You will see reminders of this on the paper towel dispensers to make sure you don't forget.

Finding Your Way

Transport



There are lots of ways of getting to school, whether it is by bus, car, bike or walking. You may decide that now you are in secondary school, you want to start arriving to school in a different way than you did in primary school. For example you might start cycling to school instead of being driven by someone else.

If you choose to cycle to school, we have bicycle racks where you can lock your bike securely in the morning. These are located in the car park near the door of the Sports Hall. Don't forget to bring your own bike lock and to wear a helmet!

Bus Eireann currently runs school buses from multiple locations to Galway Educate Together Secondary School. Application for a place on the school bus service occur through the Bus Eireann website each April. Contact Bus Eireann directly for more details. The school bus arrives at the school at 8am each morning. Public buses may also be an option.

In School Supports



Secondary school is no different to primary school when it comes to asking for help, you just have more teachers to ask and this can be daunting. Questions are welcome by all teachers once they are asked in the right way.

We all go through a range of feelings and emotions in one day, this is perfectly normal. When a bad mood or anxious feeling lasts for a long period of time, speaking to your teachers, friends and/or family can be helpful.

Your school has a whole host of people who are trained to help and support you through whatever happens on your journey through post primary.

You can come to any of the staff, at any time, if you need help or would like to talk about something that is worrying you.

In School Supports



Here is a quick introduction to the friendly faces of the staff that we currently have here at GETSS:



Sarah



Sinéad



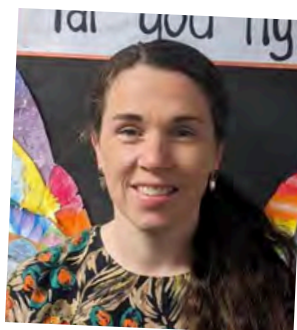
Ann-Marie



Clodagh



Peader



Katriona



Aoife



Martina



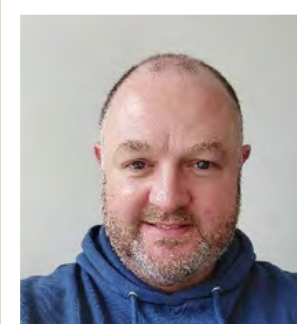
Noreen



Tara



Aimée



John

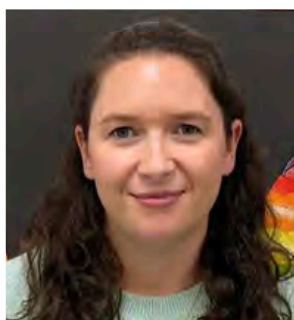
In School Supports



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Michelle



Jill



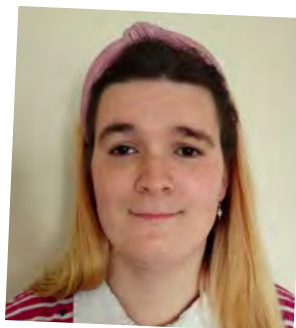
Gary



Laura



Esther



Rosaline



Richard



Sharon



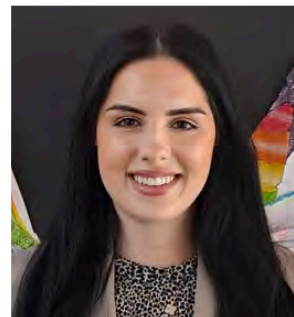
Katriona



Paula



Donna



Chloe

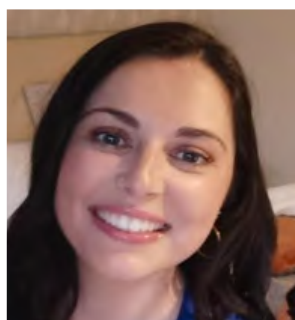
In School Supports



Here is a quick introduction to the friendly faces of the staff that we currently have here at GETSS:



Leanne



Hazel



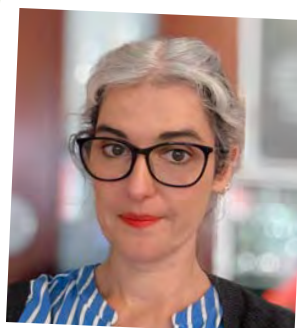
Evan



Sarah



Rowie



Angela



Martin



Fiona



Nicole



Tara



Niamh



Laura

In School Supports



Here is a quick introduction to the friendly faces of the staff that we currently have here at GETSS:



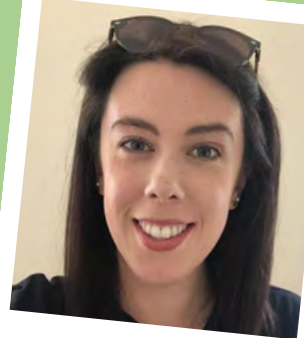
Jade



LeighAnn



Eleanor



Nora



Lisa



James



Peanut



Scan the QR code
to find out more
about our team



Your Learning Tutor



At the beginning of each day, all students attend tutor time at 8.30am for 15 minutes, before the first class. Tutor is important, as it is a set time with your class tutor where you can ask questions or discuss any issues or concerns you might have. You will have time to get organised for the week ahead on Mondays, and your tutor will also have different activities lined up such as mindfulness, literacy/numeracy activities, Global Citizen Education (GCE) activities. You will find out who your class tutor will be during your induction.



Your Learning Core Subjects



In Galway Educate Together Secondary School Students we have six core subjects which they are required to take:

English	Science
Gaelige	French/Spanish
Maths	History

All students will also take:

CSPE	Physical Education
SPHE	Ethical Education

Short Courses

All students at GETSS will also have the opportunity to experience other short courses. These may include: **Coding, Artistic Performance, Climate Action and Negotiated Learning.**

Your Learning Option Subjects



Taster Programme

In Galway Educate Together Secondary School all first year students will have the opportunity to sample each optional subject before selecting their optional subjects for the Junior Cycle. You do not need to make a decision about your option subjects until the Halloween break. Here is a brief description of the option subjects that may be available.

Applied Technology

It helps to develop your curiosity of the technological world while also helping you to build the skills you need to investigate and solve real-life problems.

Business Studies

It helps you to make more informed decisions in the everyday business of living. It gives you a better understanding of the world of work. It encourages you to think about how and why people start up in business and why you too might also consider starting a business.

Your Learning Option Subjects



Geography

Helps you to develop the knowledge and skills you need to explore and understand the world around you. This is achieved through the study of three main areas:

- Exploring people, place and change
- Exploring the physical world
- Exploring how we interact with the physical world.



Graphics

Aims to:

- develop students' creativity, spatial ability, and capacity to reason and communicate ideas through engagement with abstract and applied geometric problem-solving activities
- encourage the development of the cognitive and practical dexterity skills associated with graphical communication
- instil an appreciation of the role of graphics in the world around them
- encourage the production of drawings that promotes the skills of communicating through graphics
- develop students' cognitive and practical skills associated with modelling and graphical communication



Your Learning Option Subjects



Home Economics

Helps you to know how to be environmentally conscious and dedicated to a sustainable and responsible way of life through the exploration of three areas of learning:

- Responsible Family Living
- Food, Health & Culinary Skills
- Textiles & Craft

You will develop practical food and health literacy skills, creative design and textile skills whilst also becoming resourceful, innovative, adaptable, and competent consumers.

Music

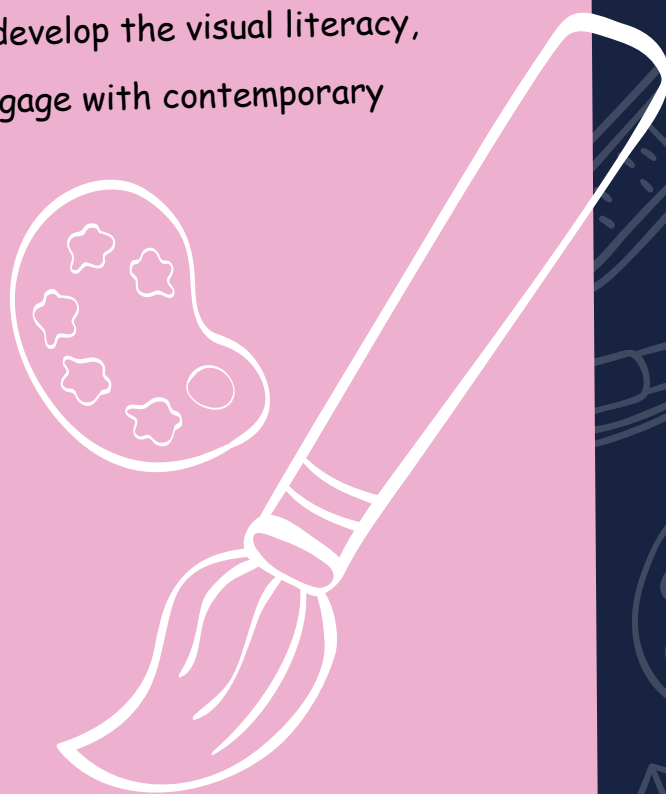
Helps you to build upon self-expression, self-esteem and imagination through music. You will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to produce and engage with authentic and original music, that is both yours and the music of others. In doing so, you will develop the music literacy, critical skills and language necessary to engage with today's musical world.

Your Learning Option Subjects



Visual Art

Through practical engagement in the areas of art, craft and design, you will develop self-confidence, inquisitiveness, imagination, and creativity. You will also develop authentic, real-world problem-solving skills and the capacity to work over time, as an individual and in groups, on the design and execution of artistic and aesthetic tasks. You will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to produce and to engage with authentic and original art, craft and design work. In so doing, you will begin to develop the visual literacy, critical skills and language necessary to engage with contemporary culture.



Getting Organised!

Your Bag



In secondary school you will be using lots of different types of equipment for each class. The increase in the amount of materials you need for post primary school compared to primary school can feel overwhelming, but getting organised and feeling in control of all your new materials will help you feel more confident and settled.

Your Bag

Try to only carry around exactly what you need for each day. Where possible, leave everything else in your locker or at home. You will need to keep your pencil case, journal and iPad in your bag for every class in secondary school.

It is important to clean out your bag regularly as it is amazing what gets lost at the bottom of a messy school bag. It is a good idea to have an A4 zip folder for each subject so that you can keep all relevant copies and materials together in one section. Not only will this keep your bag tidy but it will also help you avoid losing things or getting your copies mixed up.

Label your bag by writing your name on it or attaching a key ring somewhere so that you can easily identify your bag.



Getting Organised!

Your Pencilcase



Your Pencil Case

In primary school, most of the equipment you need is kept in the classroom. However, at secondary school, you will be expected to have your own pencils and pens and you will have to carry them all around with you. In your pencil case you should have the following items so you are prepared for class:

Pens	Pencil	Eraser
Ruler	Calculator	Maths Set
Earphones	Glue	Small scissors

QUICK TIPS

Repack your bag each evening with materials and books that you need by looking at your timetable to see what subjects you have the next day so that it is ready to go for the morning, this will save you time.

Getting Organised!

Subject-Specific Requirements



Different teachers and subjects require different materials. This can feel overwhelming in the beginning but if you make a list of the things you need for each subject, you can tick them off as you organise your bag for school the next day. Your teachers will let you know what extra materials you need for each subject during your induction, so you don't need to worry about having these particular items before you start secondary school. Below is list of materials you might need for specific subjects.

Technical Graphics	T-square, colouring pencils
Music	Recorder, earphones, manuscript copy
Art	Art Pack and Art supplies
Applied Technology	Safety goggles
Home Economics	Apron and ingredients on the days you are cooking
PE	Hi-Vis Jacket and appropriate clothing e.g. runners, tracksuit

Getting Organised!

Learning Symbols



At GETSS, we call homework 'Home Learning'. Home Learning is so important for your learning journey. Not only does it show your teachers your level of understanding but it also helps you to retain information that you've learned in class. It is important to be organised and to balance your workload in order to avoid stress and forget completing some/all your Home Learning tasks.

The Home Learning Symbols

In your One Notes, you will see the yellow home learning symbol. These will help you to find your home learning easily when you are working at home in the evenings. Your teachers will tell you how much time you will need to spend on each home learning activity.



Getting Organised!

Other Symbols



This symbol will be on the whiteboard to show how long your home learning should take to complete. Your teacher will write a time beside this symbol e.g. 10 mins



This symbol will be on the whiteboard to tell you what date your home learning should be handed in to your teacher. Your teacher will write a date beside this symbol e.g. 5th April



This symbol will tell you whether or not you will need an iPad to complete your home learning. Your teacher will put a tick on the whiteboard beside this symbol if you need your iPad.

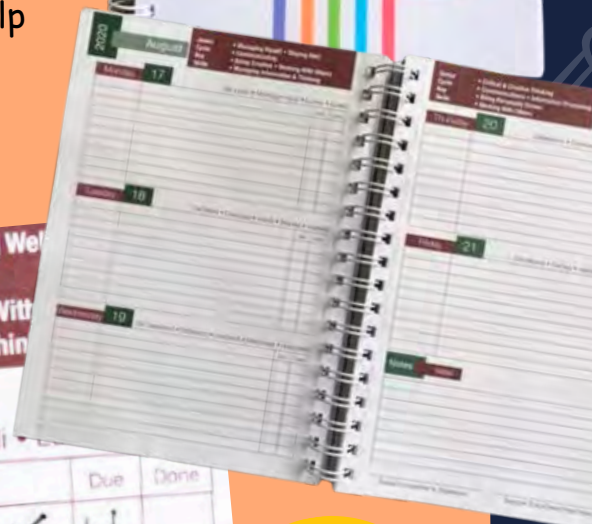


Getting Organised!

Your Journal



You will be given a new Student Journal at the start of each school year. This is the best way to keep track of your Home Learning tasks and keep all your reminders in one place. Each Monday during tutor class, you will write all your subjects for the week ahead into your Journal. It is important to keep your Journal neat and tidy at all times. Doing this will help you stay organised with your work.



2020 August		Junior Cycle Key Skills	
Monday 17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Myself • Staying Well • Communicating • Being Creative • Working With • Managing Information & Think 	
Tutor	Get journal signed	Due	Done
English	Read ch.2 of novel 10mins ✓	W	
History	Q1-6 p33 20mins	T	
Maths	See Teams 15mins ✓	F	
Music	See photos 5mins	Th	
Ethical Ed.	Reflection on CheNote 10mins ✓		
SPHE			



Getting Organised!

Your iPad/App



At GETSS, all students use an iPad in class and for most of their Home Learning tasks. Instead of carrying textbooks around for each subject, you will be able to access all your books and classes on your iPad. It is important to **make sure that your iPad is charged every evening** so that you have a full battery for your next day at school. There are many different apps on your iPad that you will use regularly so it is a good idea to familiarise yourself with these **app symbols**.



Safari

This symbol is used to access the internet. You will use the internet regularly in secondary school for research tasks and to access a range of websites.



OneNote

OneNote can be thought of as an online copybook. Through this app you can access all your classes and the content that your teachers have taught you in class. You will use this app both at school and at home for Home Learning so it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with OneNote.



Getting Organised!

Your iPad/App



Teams

This app is like an online group for all GETSS students. You will be added to a 'Team' for each of your classes where you can access your Home Learning instructions, assignments, ask questions and leave messages for your classmates or teacher about school work. It's a great way to communicate with other students, especially if you have a question while you are at home. Your teachers will leave messages and post on Teams regularly so it's a good idea to check this app every day to make sure you haven't missed any important information.



Outlook

This app is where you will send and receive your emails. Each student is given an email address at the start of the school year.



OneDrive

OneDrive is very important for storing and saving any school work that you have completed on your iPad. It is similar to an online folder where you can keep all your work together in one place. It is important to keep your OneDrive folders tidy and organised so it is easier to find your work when you need it.



Getting Organised!

Your iPad/App



PowerPoint

You will use the PowerPoint app for presentations and projects in secondary school. From this app, you can create slides with information and pictures about different topics to present to your classmates.



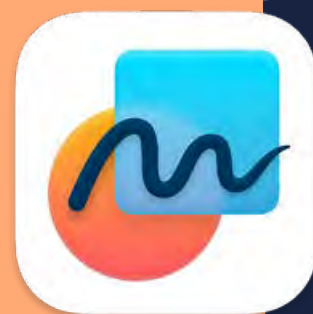
Kahoot!

This is definitely favourite app amongst students at GETTS. Kahoot! Is a fun way to practice all your learning through quizzes and challenges with your classmates. Can you beat them all in a Kahoot! Quiz?



Freeform

This app is great for taking notes while you are also in OneNote on a split screen. It is definitely the app to use for mind maps, as it allows to add images, videos, links...everything you need. Perfect for planning projects, sharing ideas and collaborating with others.



Looking After Our School



Here at GETSS we strongly believe in acting responsibly when it comes to the waste that we produce. Each student at GETSS plays a part in this by using the correct bins and bringing their food waste home. Everyone must do their part to look after the school, keep it tidy and treat it with respect. Remember we are sharing the space with lots of other teachers and students.

YOUR RECYCLING LIST!



Rigid Plastic



Tins and Cans



Clean,
Dry and
Loose

Paper and Cardboard



GALWAY
EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Paper Recycling Point



1850 22 44 88

www.walshwaste.com



Permit no: NWCP0-08-03504-03

You will see
informative
posters and
recycling bins like
these all around
our school.

GALWAY
EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Looking After Our School

Single Use Plastic

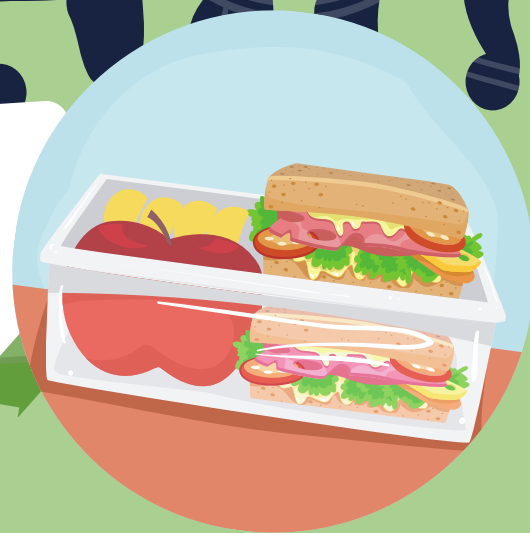


The Green Team is a group of students who help us all be more environmentally conscious. They have introduced a policy to make GETSS single-use plastic free. This means that our students and teachers do not bring plastic items that are not reusable to school, such as straws, cling-film and disposable cutlery, disposable plastic bottles and disposable cups. Instead, we encourage our students to bring reusable bottles and lunchboxes and avoid things like tinfoil and plastic bottles.



Looking After Our School

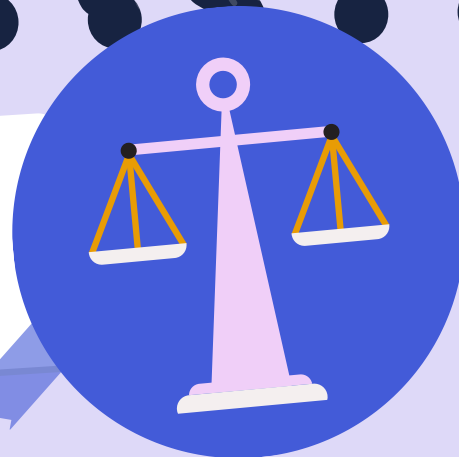
Eating Healthily



At GETSS we believe that healthy packed lunch can make a valuable contribution to your diet and future health as well as your learning. It is important to include a balanced variety of foods so that you can get all the nutrients you need. This will help you to concentrate better in class and keep your energy up throughout the day. We often pack the same things for lunch everyday but changing the content of your lunchbox will make it much more enjoyable! Here are some tips on keeping healthy during your time in secondary school:

- Eat plenty vegetables, salad and fruit - up to seven servings a day
- Limit intake of high fat, sugar, salty food and drinks
- Drink lots of water to keep you hydrated (no sugary/energy drinks, please!)
- Choose plenty of whole grains such as wholemeal cereals, breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.
- Choose lean meat, poultry and oily fish. Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham.
- Include eggs, beans and nuts throughout the week.
- Portion size matters: Use the food pyramid as a guide for serving sizes.
- Keep active

Student Voice



Educate Together schools are democratic and inclusive in nature. This means that students are presented with opportunities to participate and influence many aspects of school life in Galway ETSS. Students who are actively involved in decisions about their lives are more likely to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

In Galway ETSS students are empowered to engage in decision-making; they can be members of the Student Council, the Green Team and other working groups. Students will not only share their opinions and suggestions on issues that affect them, but they will share their voice by collaborating in decision-making with teachers and adults to improve educational outcomes. You may be given the chance to vote on which novel you would like to study for English when you begin first year, for example. You will be given many opportunities to vote on different learning options, activities and preferences throughout your time at GETSS.



House System & Points



Houses

To help promote a sense of community across all year groups, students will be divided into 6 different houses. This means you will be placed in either the Red, Green, Yellow, Purple, Blue or Orange house with students from other year groups. You will find out which colour house you are placed in during your induction.

Just like in Harry Potter, students can earn house points for their house. Every term, all the house points are added up and the winning house will be rewarded for their efforts at the end of the school year.

How do I earn house points?

There are lots of different ways to earn points for your house. All staff members have tokens which they can award to students (1 token = 1 house point). You can earn a token, for effort, improvement, a good attitude, teamwork, inclusion, kindness, helpfulness, positivity, respect or Random Acts of Kindness. If you receive a token from a staff member, you then place it in the jar that represents your house colour. These jars are on display at the bottom of the stairs near the GP area.



What if..... ??????



I'm late

It is best to be on time for school every day. However, if it is unavoidable that you are late, you must buzz the intercom at the main front door and ask to be let into the school. You must then sign in at the office before you go to class using the tablet.



I forget my iPad

It is a good idea to pack your bag the night before school so that you don't forget your iPad. If you do forget your iPad, you must tell your teachers. The teacher may then tell you to go to the office and ask Georgina, the school secretary, if you can call home and ask for a parent/guardian to drop your iPad to the school. There may not always be someone available to drop your iPad to school if you forget it, so it is wise to always check that it is in your bag before you leave for school.



I feel sick

It isn't nice to feel unwell, especially at school. If you do become unwell at school, you should tell a staff member. We will make sure that we do all we can to make you feel better. There is a first aid kit and water available in the school office if required.



What if..... ?????



I don't understand something in class

You will be learning lots of new things in secondary school and there might be times where you don't understand something in class. This can happen to a lot of new students but your teachers and SSAs are there to help. It is perfectly ok to ask questions when needed. You can put up your hand in class, post a question on teams or even ask a classmate to explain something to you if you are confused.



My iPad battery is dead

It is important to stay organised and charge your iPad every night to make sure you are ready for school the next day. If there is a day where you have forgotten to charge your iPad fully and the battery dies while at school, you can ask a teacher if you can plug it in to charge in the classroom. If you don't have a charger, a teacher may be able to let you borrow one temporarily. It's important to get into the habit of charging it at home though and avoid having your iPad battery die while at school as the charging sockets are not located near the desks. This means you will be without your iPad while it charges and you may be unable to do your school work properly.



What if..... ?????



I am upset

We all go through a range of feelings and emotions in one day, this is perfectly normal. If you are feeling upset, speaking to a teacher, your friends and/or family can be helpful. At GETSS, we have a whole host of people who are trained to help and support you if you are feeling upset at school. You can come to any of the staff, at any time, if you need help or would like to talk about something that is worrying you. If you are unsure about who to speak to, you should start by talking to your Tutor.



I can't find my classroom

Starting in a new school can be daunting and you may be unsure of where all the classrooms are at the very beginning. If you get lost on the school grounds and can't find your classroom, there are lots of people you can ask for help. Any teacher or another student from second/third year who are more familiar with the school layout will be happy to show you where to go. If you can't find anyone to ask, you can always look at the map in this transition booklet to see where you should go. It is a good idea to keep a copy of this booklet in your bag so you always have a map to hand.



What if..... ?????



I need to make a phone call

Mobile phones are not allowed to be used at GETSS. You are allowed to have your phone with you, but it must be switched off at all times when you are at school. Sometimes you may need to make a phone call to a parent/guardian and in this case, you should come to the school office and ask if you can make a call. It is not permitted to turn on your mobile phone to make a call during school hours. If you are on your phone in the school building, it will be confiscated.



I need a movement break

Each of our classes at GETSS run for 1 hour. This might feel like a long time to sit in one place compared to primary school. Many teachers will plan for a stretch break at different points in their class to allow students to stretch and move. This will help you to concentrate better in class after some movement. If you need to take movement breaks more regularly, you should speak to your Tutor or ask a parent or guardian to contact Katriona Woods, teacher who will be able to help.

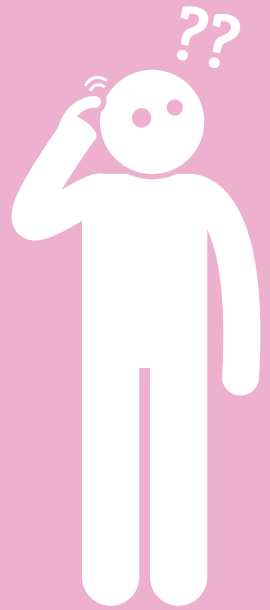


What if..... ??????



I forget my lunch






Eating a lunch is very important when you are in secondary school. Not only will it stop you from being hungry but it will provide you with the energy you need for the day. Just like your iPad, it is a good idea to check and see if you have put your lunch in your bag before you leave for school. On the rare incident that you may have forgotten to bring your lunch, you should go to the school office and speak to Noreen or tell one of your teachers.



Preparing for secondary







How to prepare for secondary school over the summer holidays

-  We hope this transition booklet will have given you a better idea of what to expect before you start at Galway Educate Together Secondary School. There are lots of ways to prepare for post primary school over the summer holidays in addition to the information we have provided here.
-  Familiarise yourself with the school map and practice locating certain classrooms on it. For example, you might plan out which route you could take to get from Learning Space 3 (LS10) to the Art room.
-  Review the sample timetable in this booklet to make sure you understand how to read it. Look for the room number, teacher's name and subject.
-  Practice packing your school bag. This might involve reading a sample day from the timetable and packing everything that you would need for your classes that day e.g. Hi-Vis jacket for PE, Geography copy, fully charged iPad etc.
-  Get your equipment prepared - make sure to have all the required equipment ready before you come to secondary school e.g. pens, pencils etc.

Preparing for secondary



How to prepare for secondary school over the summer holidays

-  Get in the habit of charging your iPad every evening. The more you practice this habit, the less likely you are to forget to do it when you start secondary school. Make it as regular as brushing your teeth!
-  Take time looking through the apps on your iPad. It might be a while before you fully understand how every app works but it is a good idea to get a head start by browsing through them before you start post primary school.
-  Practice reading the time (digital or analogue). In secondary school, it is important to know the time so you are able to read your timetable and arrive/leave class when you need to. There will be a clock in every classroom and a digital clock will be on your iPad. You may choose to wear your own watch too.
-  Have a look at our social media pages to get a feel for what school is like at GETSS. You will see lots of examples of all the hard work and fun activities our students do each year.

Top tips from students!

Make a home learning schedule to stay on track

Put a copy of your timetable on your bedroom wall

Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

Be respectful to everyone and try your best

Get a good nights sleep every night

Make sure you fully charge your iPad every night

Don't rush when picking your option subjects

Write important notes and dates in your journal.

Don't stress and try to make as many friends as possible.

Try to earn as many house points as you can