

# ADVICE FROM OTHER PARENTS

## **SOME ADVICE ON HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AS THEY START IN LUCAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Think about how your son/daughter will adapt to the change to second level education, considering his/her personality and individual traits. Identify possible positive and negative experiences for your child and talk about ways to cope with negative experiences.

<i>New people and policies</i>	Help students become familiar with names of key personnel in school. Read a variety of materials from school, e.g., school homework journal, policies, rules, sample timetable, etc. Who can they ask for help? Use the student induction process.
<i>Supporting homework</i>	Overview of first year books. Explanation of the homework diary. Planning homework time (record time spent on different subjects, tick off completed work, etc.). Supports parents can provide include making space, reducing distractions, offering encouragement, etc. What to do when a child is struggling?
<i>Communication to and from school</i>	Important school dates, names and numbers for school staff. Who to contact for different issues. Preparing questions for parent-teacher meetings. Reading text messages, letters from school, parents' newsletter. Writing notes to school using the school app (e.g., explaining absence, requesting early release).
<i>Understanding school expectations</i>	What is expected from children re: homework, uniform, lockers, punctuality? The school code of behaviour. How can a student raise a concern appropriately?
<i>Extra-curricular activities</i>	Encourage your son/daughter to get involved in some extra-curricular activity as soon as possible. This will help your child to develop new friendships. Activities are announced over the intercom system and take place during lunchtime or after school.
<i>School equipment</i>	Help your son/daughter to label all items of equipment: uniform, PE gear, books, copies, pencil case, etc. Try to drop forgotten items into the office prior to morning announcements at 10.30am to facilitate us passing them on.
<i>School books</i>	Most school books and resources will be supplied by the school using the government grant. Cover and label books if needed. Teachers will specify which books should be brought to class on which day to reduce weight of school bag. Help your son/daughter to make good use of the locker. Download the online version of the books for use at home using the code inside the cover.
<i>Supports and concerns</i>	Outlining supports in place for children with specific learning difficulties/additional needs. Other ways the school supports students. Discussing concerns with the school.
<i>Student voice and student leadership</i>	Student council, class reps, class captains, Gluais, school prefects and captains. Opportunities to be a leader in the classroom, through extra-curricular activities and various events throughout the year.
<i>Parents voice and involvement</i>	Attending Parents' Association meetings, attending school events, supporting son/daughter in their activities, formal and informal meetings with teachers, phone calls and visits to office, feedback.

# ADVICE FROM OTHER PARENTS

## *Supporting your son/daughter as they prepare for study and exams*

- **A QUIET PLACE TO WORK.** Ensure your son/daughter has a quiet place in the house to study WITHOUT distractions such as TV, mobile phones, video games and internet access (unless they are using revision web sites – but monitor this carefully).
- **ORGANISATION.** Help your son/daughter to get their work/folders in order – buy new ones if necessary and A4 dividers for files. Ensure that the school bag and locker is well organised so that class books and resources can be easily found. After homework/study, help your son/daughter to empty his/her school bag and repack it using the timetable for the next day. Putting the relevant copy into the relevant textbook may be useful. Some students find colour-coded folders useful. Decide on a wall space at home to display timetables and important dates. Have a folder for school notices. Ensure that your child's name is on everything so that lost property can be returned successfully.
- **DISCUSSION.** Discuss which methods of revision your son/daughter finds most useful (e.g. note taking, mind maps, voice recording and playback, answering sample questions, being asked questions verbally, etc).
- **RESOURCES.** Purchase any other necessary resources, e.g., index/revision cards, coloured markers, stickers, etc.
- **TAKING BREAKS!** Ensure that your son/daughter takes regular breaks in their revision and study but do not let them procrastinate or overdo it!
- **PLANNING.** Support your son/ daughter to plan their revision using a suitable timetable template.
- **EATING WELL.** Concentration, focus and memory are all boosted by super foods such as broccoli, nuts, seeds, and fruit. Sugary foods only give a short- lived burst of energy followed by an energy slump. They should also drink plenty of water and avoid high energy drinks.
- **KNOW YOUR SON/ DAUGHTER** – if they are very conscientious, ensure they do not put themselves under too much pressure and attempt more work than is healthy. If they lack motivation, they will need encouragement and support to get stuck in and work! Try to get your son/daughter into the habit of doing regular and concentrated study during the school year.
- **SLEEP.** Ensure they get sufficient sleep! Avoid having TV, computer games and mobile phones in bedrooms. Plug the phone in downstairs when going to bed.
- **EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING IT!** No, they are not!! Decide on the boundaries that are appropriate for your son /daughter within your family. Rules regarding mobile phones, social media, bedtime, access to money, use of alcohol will all be on the table for negotiations with your young adult. Implementing boundaries as puberty begins has a much greater chance of success than trying to impose these boundaries *after* an incident has occurred. Our parents have a wide variety of rules and boundaries, so it is fair to say that not everyone else is doing it!

*With thanks to staff, members of our Board of Management and Parents' Association who have shared their personal experience of this exciting time!*