

# Castletownroche N.S.

# Prospectus for New Families - 2024

# Principal's Welcome

It is with great enthusiasm and anticipation that I, as Principal, welcome prospective students to Castletownroche National School. There is an old Chinese proverb that states, "Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself." Therefore, I invite you via these pages to enter the world of Castletownroche National School. Sample an array of pursuits from the academic to liberal arts, from sporting to musical, from individual pursuits to team pursuits.



Your children will be challenged and encouraged in our school and they will have the opportunity to discover and develop their talents.

At Castletownroche National School we have a team of high-calibre, committed, dedicated teachers whose primary concern will be to help your children to be the best that they can be while having fun becoming just that.

I am very proud of this school but I am even more proud of our pupils. You can see the work of our pupils and their achievements as you traverse these pages and you will see the wealth of talent that we continuously nurture.



We hope that by browsing the following pages you will gain a flavour of life in Castletownroche National School; a place where friendships are made, talents developed and nourished and where the exciting world of knowledge, success and endeavor is open for your children. We hope that you get an idea of the bright, confident and happy children in our care.

Is mise le meas.



#### Mission Statement

In spring of 2021, we began the process of compiling our new Mission Statement. We reached out to parents, teachers, the Board of Management and most importantly, our pupils in order to forge a statement which outlines our values and aims. It goes as follows:

Castletownroche N.S., in partnership with pupils, parents and the local community, is dedicated to providing a safe, welcoming, nurturing and positive environment that has respect and compassion at its core. We strive to deliver an inclusive and holistic education for all, through a child-centred approach to learning, celebrating the individuality of each child.

professional helpful confidence nurruring listeners enthusiastic positive patient team passionate supportive learning passionate supportive learning passionate supportive learning pride motivated honest kindness horganized empathy unique caring interested tolerance interesting stimulating fun clean respect safe

We provide fun, creative and stimulating learning experiences which are meaningful and promote life skills. These will encourage students to become lifelong learners with a respect and an appreciation for the world and people around them. Our supportive actions will help our students to become confident and competent, motivated, respectful and responsible citizens who foster positive relationships with others. We aim to empower our students to achieve their full potential and develop a belief in their own abilities.

We aspire to promote the positive attitudes of kindness, empathy and respect across the school community. We strongly believe that all children should feel valued, cared for, safe and happy within their school environment.

Castletownroche N.S. 2021

# Aistear Early Childhood Education

In Castletownroche N.S., we have embraced the Aistear early childhood curriculum framework for children up to the age of six years.



Aistear provides the types of learning experiences that are important for children during early childhood which will stand to them throughout their lives. It is very popular among the pupils and staff. Our staff are continuously undertaking Professional Development training in how to most successfully implement the Aistear Curriculum.

## Station Teaching

Throughout the school year, we focus on introducing much of the children's learning through well thoughtout and executed Station Teaching. This can be done in a variety of curricular areas and may involve the Class Teacher, SEN Teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants all in one classroom.



Students work on a variety of activities all based on a set of learning outcomes.



It is fantastic to see how confident the children become at working both independently and in small groups.

#### School Self-Evaluation

As part of our collaborative, inclusive and reflective school self-improvement plan, this year we have begun to focus on the area of "Health and Well-Being" for our entire school community. We recognized the importance and appetite to learn more about Well-Being in its various guises.

We began this process by surveying the parent body of the school and focused on what priorities they wanted us to recognize. We then surveyed our student body who recognized some very important areas to focus on. Having collated the results, we will implement our School Self-Improvement Plan from the point of view of (1) Healthy Eating and Nutrition; (2) Physical Well-Being including Physical Literacy and Fitness and (3) finally the complex area of positive

Mental Health which can be influenced by so many factors.



Already, the children have begun to address these areas with great relish. Each class engages daily in an initiative called the "Daily Mile" where our 200m runway at the rear of the school is so well utilized. Already this year, the children have taken part in GAA coaching in both Hurling and Football; Rugby sessions in conjunction with Munster IRFU and Mallow RFC plus Table Tennis for pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class. Plans are also in place for Soccer Coaching sessions, Zumba, Hit Interval Training for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class plus Swimming for all.



In terms of our focus on Nutrition and Healthy
Eating, the student Council have already conducted a
"lunchbox survey" in the hope that we can bring focus
to the amount of added sugar that certain foods add
to our lunches. This has been such a worthwhile
exercise and we found that with simple adjustments,
children can enjoy much healthier lunches. We hope
that the good work carried out by the children in our

school garden and new Heptagon Grow House will bring much more focus to this.



As mentioned earlier, the area of positive Mental Health is quite a complex area. At the school, we are very proactive in engaging with programmes such as Mindful Matter, Stay-Safe, Walk-Tall. We feel that education about mental health is an integral part of the school curriculum. We believe that we play a vital role in the promotion of positive mental health in children. Schools can also provide a safe and supportive environment for building life skills, resilience and a strong sense of connectedness to the school community. Our team are constantly undertaking Continuous Professional Development courses in areas of Health and Well-Being. One such recent course was through Nurture Schools Ireland which better allows us to use informed interventions in helping pupils navigate this world.



In 2023, the school was granted the Amber Flag for the great work carried out in promoting positive Mental Health. We also recognize that important factors such as limited screen-time, quality sleep, mindfulness and a sense of belonging are key to positive Mental Health.



We also take every opportunity to immerse the children in nature as frequently as possible. We are so lucky to enjoy such a beautiful location in the village of Castletownroche.



This new area of School Self-Improvement will last several years before finding a new area to focus on.

Before moving to an new area, all parties will be invited to give feedback. This is an essential part of influencing what it is you would like your child to learn about in the short as well as long term.

# Say Yes to Languages Programme

For the first time in 2023, we completed our brand new "Say Yes to Languages" programme here at Castletownroche National School. Our secretary Lynn taught the children how to speak French.



The children learned lots of French greetings and conversational phrases which created a confidence in learning a modern foreign language. They learned to count in French, say their names, what age they were, how they were feeling, how the weather is etc. They learned through a variety of fun ways such as song, dance, poetry and games. The children had great fun and got more and more confident each week. Merci to our secretary Lynn for making this happen.



# Tree Planting & Gardening

We developed a Heritage School Garden. This has a variety of native Irish trees, wildflowers and provides delicious vegetables for the school kitchen. In the autumn of 2023, we added our new Heptagon House which will allow us to grow food all year around and will bring the growing season forward significantly so that the children can enjoy and possibly even sell their produce. Great plans are already afoot for the

new 2024 growing season with plans for a variety of fruit and vegetables that will thrive in the Heptagon House. There is even the possibility that we might add some laying hens on our enrolment!













The pupils frequently participate in Cookery sessions in our purpose built and fully equipped school kitchen. We always celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a hearty Irish Meal with produce from our school garden.

#### The Student Council

In Castletownroche N.S., we believe in legislating for and nurturing the 'Student Voice'. Simply put, giving the students a voice inspires and empowers them to take charge of their education. In our school, annual elections take place in order to elect students to the council. This is a democratic and transparent process.



The council enables the students to use their own knowledge to contribute to the classroom and to the school. We believe that when students feel comfortable sharing their voices, they grow into positions of leadership. Having an active Student Council provides the children with a sense of ownership over their environment and learning.

# Sports and Physical Education

Every child in our care enjoys the opportunity to fully participate in a wide range of sporting and physical activities. Weekly, the children enjoy Physical Education lessons taught to a high standard. Great emphasis is placed on educating the children from the ground up with each child participating in 3 Fundamental Movement sessions daily.



Over the years, the children participated in Skipping Workshops, Gymnastics Classes, Hip-Hop and Ball-Room Dancing Classes, Spike-ball, Zumba, Rugby, Soccer, Table Tennis, an annual Aquatics Programme and Yoga.

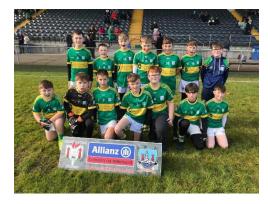


The school enjoys an excellent relationship with the local GAA Club and each child is coached to a high standard by voluntary club coaches. The children from 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> class participate in all Sciath na Scol Competitions and blitzes and enjoyed great success in 2019 when winning the girls Sciath na Scol Football Final for the first time in the school's history.



They also enjoyed success at the St. Colman's and Loreto Blitz while the 4<sup>th</sup> Class Boys won the Shield Final of the Indoor Hurling County Finals. This year, the boys reached the final of the Sciath na Scol

Football final and were only narrowly beaten by a strong Analeentha NS Team.



In 2019, the school was awarded the Active Flag for work carried out in the previous years for promoting physical activities among the student body. The school continues to take part in this very worthwhile initiative.



We have also taken part in the Daily Mile Exercise
Initiative which utilizes the 2 acres of grounds that
the school enjoys. We have constructed a 200m
running and cycle track around the school grounds
which the children run every day for their Daily Mile.





Beginning in May of this year, all classes will participate in a new and exciting Fundamental Movement Programme. The school was especially selected to take part in this Pilot Programme. It aims to teach the children fundamental movements using three overarching categories: locomotor, non-locomotor and manipulative. This will be of huge benefit to the children throughout their lives.

The children in the older classes use the astro turf on a regular basis. This wonderful facility has been particularly beneficial during the colder months.

Castletownroche N.S. received a shared Sports

Capital Grant. The €7,500 grant was spent on a significant purchase sports equipment that has made us the envy of North Cork!



Every year we undertake 'Bike Week' which the children love. We recently took part in a Cycling Ireland Initiative which was a huge success.



We had children from every class making an effort to cycle to school and take part in bicycle activities. We had a high of 62 pupils cycling to school from a total of 89. We look forward to participating again in May 2023.



#### Green Schools Initiative

The Green Schools Flag Initiative is a student-led whole school action plan based on environmental care. Our school has a Green Schools Committee who are democratically elected by their class peers. We are very proud to have such a dedicated team.



In 2022, the school was presented with its 5th Green Schools Flag for 'Promoting Biodiversity in our School" having already received 4 other flags for 'Reduction

of Waste, Conservation of Energy, Conservation of Water and promoting more sustainable means of Travelling to school". The school will focus on our next Green Flag which is for 'Global Citizenship' in 2024-2025.

#### Coiste Gaelach

The pupils and teachers of Castletownroche N.S. make a phenomenal effort to embrace and celebrate our National Language - Gaeilge. This hasn't happened by fluke however and much of the credit must go to our newly established Irish Committee or Coiste Gaelach. Each week, the committee busily introduces pupils of the school to new Irish Phrases which the children practice throughout the day. Not only that but they organise for the announcing of our weekly Gaeilgeoirí na Seachtaine or Irish Speakers of the week from each class. The winners are treated to either an Animal Bar or Fredo from the local Downey's Spar for their efforts and get to participate in reward activities such as Cake Baking or Pizza Making in our school pizza oven.



The coiste can also be credited for our Laethanta Iomlán Gaelach where the kids participate in activities throughout the day as Gaeilge, just like a pop-up Gaeltacht. This happens three times a year or once per term. Great fun is had by all and this helps

foster a positive attitude towards the learning of Gaeilge.

#### Breakfast and Homework Club

With the building of our new Club Room in the summer of 2022, for the beginning of the school year we began running our very popular Breakfast and Homework Clubs at the school.

This service is similar to that being offered in many secondary schools at present. The idea behind these services is that children will be supervised for a nominal fee before and after school. The Breakfast Club Service begins at 7:50 a.m. so that children can have their breakfast and be supervised until school begins. The Homework Club Service operates so that the pupils can do their homework free from the distractions of home after school. This facility has been very popular and is a wonderful opportunity for the parents and children of Castletownroche N.S.

# Occupational Therapy Playground

In the summer of 2022, while upgrading all of the yards and footpaths at the school, we built a fully fenced compound at the back of the school. We are very glad to say that this space is now populated and it is a fully fledged Occupational Therapy Playground. It has been a wonderful addition to the school and is comprised of a variety of multi-sensory pieces of furniture and equipment.



This space includes a single child in-ground trampoline, a multifunctional climbing frame, a swing, a see-saw plus a variety of balance beams. Plans are afoot to install a significant climbing wall around the perimeter of this space. The playground includes a rubber crumb floor for safety in the event of a fall. This will prove to be exceptionally useful for all children at the school and is a really positive addition to our already wonderful school.

# Sensory Room

During the summer of 2021, we invested funds from our Minor Works Grant to establish a much needed Sensory Room at the school. This has been such a worthwhile investment and has been an invaluable facility at the school. Popular with all of the students, it is the ideal place to relax and hangout and sometimes regulate when you're having a bad day.



# Resident Play Therapist

For the last number of years, we have had a resident play therapist at the school. We are so fortunate to have this service on our doorstep and count ourselves as the only school in the county of Cork to have a resident play therapist. A multitude of students and families have benefitted hugely from the help of our play therapist Máiréad.



## Community Links

Castletownroche N.S. enjoys very healthy relationships with all local Community Groups. The Community Council has been very supportive to the school. They have been invaluable when learning about our Local Heritage and frequently accompany the pupils on historical field-trips around the village.



We also enjoy a healthy link with the Castletownroche Tidy Towns Group. It is our intention to take part in the annual An Taisce 'Spring Clean' throughout the community as part of our Green Schools effort. The school was part of a very positive report for the Tidy Towns Report of 2023 and featured heavily.



The Community Hall Committee has been very supportive of the school and make the hall available for school activities frequently. A joint co-operation between the school and the Community Hall Committee has made it possible to secure the funds required to build an Astroturf area adjacent to the Community Hall. Furthermore they secured a further €7,500 in funds for the purchase of equipment for the school, the Community Hall plus the Juvenile GAA which has now been invested in the purchase of a huge variety of sports equipment.



We hope that by cultivating and nurturing the next generation of 'Community Activists' that these community groups will continue to thrive long into the future.

# Picker Pals

Families in our school have taken on the activity of litter picking around the village. Each week one family will receive the Picker Pal collection kit and will go around the village or their home place and collect rubbish that has been discarded. This has been a huge success. Since we started, families have collected

bags of rubbish from our village and surrounding areas.



# Digital Technology Education

In 2019, we implemented a Digital Strategy that would truly kick-start the school in all things IT-related. Our Broad-Band has been upgraded to a high-speed connection - 125mg/second. In 2023, we upgraded our ICT infrastructure with 30 HP Mini Personal Computers and 15 Lenovo Laptops. This further complimented the 30 Chromebooks which the school invested. All children enjoy the use of 15 iPads with a series of well-chosen Apps and Websites.



With the infrastructure now in-place, the pupils have begun developing keyboard and computer skills using programs such as Dance Mat and Touch-Type, Read and Spell. The senior classes frequently learn and practice Coding using a variety of resources such as Scratch, Hour of Code, Roblox and an Educational Version of Minecraft.



Being aware of the importance of online safety, we conducted a number of Online Safety Workshops in conjunction with Barnardos. This involved the provision of highly informative workshops for pupils, teachers and parents. Furthermore, each class celebrates Safer Internet Day each year. This promotes the importance of online safety and responsible behavior online, allowing our students to become informed and responsible digital citizens.

#### Achievements and Successes

At Castletownroche N.S., we like to give all of the children varied opportunities to enjoy success. Success doesn't always have to be defined by 'Winning At All Costs". Successes do not need to involve Silverware or be academic or sporting in nature. They can involve children overcoming their own personal challenges, no matter how small, in any walk of life. At Castletownroche N.S., we do our utmost to celebrate all of these achievements.



In the competitive sphere, the children have the opportunity to enjoy successes also and have enjoyed numerous achievements throughout the school year. These include Sciath na Scoil GAA competitions and blitzes, Inter-Schools Equestrian, Scór na bPáistí,

Table Quizzes, Creative Writing, Speech & Drama and Art to name but a few.



#### Aladdin Connect

In September 2019, we introduced Aladdin Connect for school administration and it has been a great success. It is a 'free to download' App for all parents and it provides a great means with which to communicate to them. It also allows parents to explain their children's absences, make online school payments and view homework, to name but a few functions.



It proved an invaluable asset during the Covid 19 school closures. All parents fully utilize Aladdin Connect. It has allowed us to further support our environmental

beliefs and we have now fully migrated away from printed notes, newsletters and permission slips.

## School Website - www.ctrns.ie

Over the last number of months, we have been busy compiling content and constructing our new school website. This will go live in the not too distant future at the following address: www.ctrns.ie. The site will have all of the usual functionality plus a number of our own unique features. The following is a glimpse of what the homepage will look like.



# School Instagram

Since October 2019, we have used Instagram as a valuable means of communicating with parents and sharing our learning with the school community. This is totally optional for all parents and they can be assured that these are private and closed accounts which are only visible to parents of pupils in the school. It is updated regularly and has proven very popular with parents. It is an excellent means of showing parents the good work that their children complete in the school.



We believe this gives them a valuable insight into what is happening in our classes on a daily basis and throughout the school-year.



#### Parent and Student Testimonials

While working on our Mission Statement, we reached out to the parent and student body for feedback. Their responses were very complimentary. It is lovely to hear that we are getting the right balance. Here are a small sample:

#### Mother of 2 pupils

Having attended Castletownroche N.S. myself, I feel very blessed that our children have the opportunity to go there also, years on. A country school, in a country setting, where our children get unbelievable one-to-one care and attention; a rarity in these modern times. The staff in CASTLETOWNROCHE N.S. are second to none. From the principal, to the teachers, the SNAs and the

secretary, each and every one does an amazing job every single day because they all care. Not only are our children taught to an excellent high standard, our children are cared for as the individuals they are. There is zero tolerance for any type of bullying, something which is very important to all of us as parents. When I leave to go to work each day, the importance of knowing our children are in a safe, fair, clean, happy and fun loving environment gives me such peace of mind. As parents, my husband and I couldn't be happier that our children are taught and looked after so well in Castletownroche NS.

#### Pupil 4th Class

I love my time in school because I learn new things every day from my teacher, Miss Deere. I also have fun playing football with my friends at lunchtime.

Castletownroche N.S. is a great place to be.

Pupil Junior and Senior Infant Class
I enjoy school because I get to play with my friends
and I love meeting my teacher Miss O'Regan every
day.

#### Pupil 5th Class

CTR School is a fun school to be in every day. All of our teachers are fair and teach us very well. I think my days there will help me grow up to be responsible, respectful, kind and smart. We are very lucky to have such great teachers who really are about us all.

#### Pupil 5th Class

Castletownroche N.S. is a caring environment.

Through play we have learned new life long skills

which will prepare us for our lives ahead. Thanks Mr.

Bracken.

### Pupil 6th Class

Castletownroche N.S. is a nice school where the students and staff are happy. It is a tidy and clean school. This school helps make people confident to help make new friends when they move on to secondary school.

#### Pupil 4th Class

We have a safe and friendly environment and all the staff have the best interest of the kids at heart. All

kids are looked after and all of their own needs are looked after in different ways. We are glad to say that all of the teachers and kids get along and if any child has a problem or difficulty, the teacher is there to help them. Castletownroche N.S. is a safe environment for all the kids that attend.

Ní neart go cur le chéile.

We hope that you enjoyed reading our School Prospectus for 2024.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at office@ctrns.ie or by telephone on (086) 414 3096 if there is anything that you require. Please find a separate Enrolment Form in the pages below. Feel free to return Enrolment Forms to the above email address or by post to the school postal address which is Castletownroche N.S., Close Road, Mallow, Co. Cork. P51KT98.

# Eóin Bracken Principal





# **Enrolment Form**

Year: (	:lass:				
Name of Pupil	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		PPS No		
Date of Birth			Gender		
Nationality of Child		Nation	nality of Parents		<del></del>
Language Support Re	equired	Yes	No		
Home Address					
Eircode					
Telephone No		Religion/Denomina	tion		_
Playschool					
Reports given to us					
Father's Name		Mother's	s Name		
Address		Address			
(if different from p			erent from pupil's)		
Occupation		Occupation	1		
Phone	Work	Phone		Work	
		address and/or contac			
2 other contacts in a	case of emergency	·.			
Name:		Number			
Name:		Number			
Name/Phone of fam	ily doctor				

Please note any educational/medical problems/allergies your child may have		
This information is sought in order to ensure inclusion through having resources applied for/in place.		
Does any legal order under family law exist that school should know about?		
Other relevant details (e.g. medical card or social welfare entitlements)		
We have received, read and understood the 'Code of Behaviour' for Castletownroche N.S. We agree to abide by this code and ensure our child understands and keeps the code. We will co-operate with the staff and support the ethos of the school. If enrolled in Castletownroche N.S. we understand we must follow school policies and procedures.		
Signature:Parent/Guardian Date:		

This document will be stored safely in the school in accordance with the School Data Protection Policy. Non-sensitive data may be shared with the Department of Education & Skills and/or HSE. Schools are required to transfer data onwards to POD and parents/guardians should be aware that they are giving their child's details for this purpose, in addition to providing it for the purpose of local school administration.

#### Parental Permission Form

We ask your permission for your child to participate in certain activities. To cut down on unnecessary paperwork and simplify record-keeping, we have included as many permissions as possible on one sheet. Please read carefully each of the items below and tick the relevant box. If you have any concerns regarding any of the items below please feel free to contact the class teacher or principal.

I hereby give permission for my child in relation to the following:	.,	
	Yes	No
Permission to go on school tours, library, local educational visits/field trips and participate in school		
activities.		
Permission for CastletownrocheN.S.to take photos of my child/children during school activities.		
Images of your child and his/her work may appear on our school websites or on our Class Instagram		
Accounts which can only be viewed by parents of the school. This is entirely for communication		
purposes and has been a great success. Images may be of individuals or groups. Only your child's		
first name will be used if at all. Do you agree to the school using your child's image and first name		
in this way?		
Occasionally local press photographers (e.g. The Avondhu) take photos of children. Do you agree to		
the School using your child's image in this way?		
Do you give permission for your child to be taken immediately to a doctor or hospital in case of		
serious illness/accident? (In a non-emergency it is the school's policy to inform parents/guardians		
if their child has had an accident in school which may require them to collect their child and take		
him/her home or to hospital/doctor). In an emergency it may be necessary to take the child to		
hospital/doctor and inform parents/guardians afterwards.		
I give my child/children permission to bake, make and taste food. Please inform us if your child has		
any allergies.		
I give permission to allow my child to attend the Learning Support/Resource teacher as part of a		
group/ class if deemed necessary. If individual sessions are deemed necessary the school will		
inform you. If no, please put in writing and the reasons why.		
On occasion we administer 'Diagnostic' tests (e.g. Neale Analysis, MIST, Belfield Infant Screening,		
NRIT) to discover the educational progress of pupils. Should any concerns arise following these		

Name/s of Child/Children	
Date	
Signature of Parent/Guardian	
Please give details of the people who have permis this routine please inform the school in writing	ssion to collect your child from school. If there is any change in  Person who usually collects child(children)  Phone
	Phone

If there is any change in this regard or if there is any other information which you think may be relevant it is very important that the school is informed immediately.

Have you enclosed a copy of the most recent	school report and attendance record? Yes
N.B. All forms: must be completed in full an the school. Proof of address must accompany	nd returned to the school before a new pupil will be enrolled in application.
Code of Behaviour	
RSE Policy Consent Form	
Medical Form	
Enrolment Application Form	
Birth Certificate	
Note: We require reports from previous school	ols in order to meet the needs of your child.
Give details of any health conditions (e.g. asthmo affect your child at school	a, eyesight, hearing, allergies, etc.) or emotional problems which may
Has your child any physical or mental disabilities school will require for your child?	s? If so are there any specific equipment/ resources that the
	<del></del>

# To be completed if your child is transferring from another Primary School

Previous School:
Address:
Telephone:
What class was your child in when he/she left the school?
Reason for Transfer: