



LC2 Guidance Department Christmas Newsletter

09.12.20

Dear Parents/Guardians,



In the absence of the annual CAO Information Evening for all LC2 parents and guardians I have uploaded a detailed CAO Powerpoint on the school website which covers a range of topics including key information regarding the CAO such as the CAO Application Process and Offer Process. Key dates and any other important information such as the HEAR and DARE schemes are also highlighted. Alternatives to the CAO such as PLCs and Apprenticeships are also briefly explored.

Some Key CAO Dates worth noting for the moment include CAO Application Opening Date was the 5th November and CAO Application Closing date is the 1st of February 2021.

In the absence of College Open Days and course speakers to schools many of the colleges are holding Virtual Open Days and recordings of college talks are accessible on the college websites. It is worth noting that UL is holding another Virtual Open Day on Saturday 16th January where parents and students can attend course talks and avail of virtual campus tours. These Virtual Open Days are obviously not as beneficial as the traditional Open Days but they are as good as it gets for the foreseeable so please encourage your son/daughter to listen to some course talks of interest.

I know all the courses and CAO information can be an absolute minefield to navigate and I would recommend using **Careersportal.ie** to help you with this. This is an excellent website which contains information on all CAO/PLC and Apprenticeship Courses. It also identifies key dates and deadlines. All LC2 students are familiar with this website and can log into their own Career File where they have saved CAO, PLC and Apprenticeship courses of interest. It may be of benefit for you as a parent/guardian to look at this Career File with your son/daughter and discuss their options for next year.

I am currently meeting all LC2 students for their individual Guidance Appointments and will be doing so until the CAO deadline. All students will be given a scheduled appointment, however, as the students have been told many times, they may move their Guidance Appointment forward by messaging me on Teams and I will schedule them in as soon as I can. Likewise, if you as a parent or guardian feel your son/daughter needs an urgent

Guidance Appointment please do not hesitate to contact me on guidance@stcaimins.ie and I will arrange this.

CAO is by no means the only option for Leaving Certs and PLC and Apprenticeships can be excellent alternatives to consider. If your son/daughter is considering an apprenticeship I would encourage them to do work experience in the trade of interest. This is an invaluable experience and will strengthen their application. **Apprenticeship.ie** is an excellent website with lots of information on Apprenticeships, also the Midwest Apprenticeship App lists local companies that are taking on apprentices and is well worth a look.

The PLC route is another option worth considering. A PLC course is a one year course that either be a specific qualification in an area or it can be used to gain entry to Third Level the following year. PLC applications are made directly to the PLC college of interest and I will upload more information on PLCs in late January to coincide with the opening of PLC Applications. It is worth noting that a student can apply to the CAO and a PLC and can leave their final decision until August when CAO offers are released.

This is the type of information that I have explained in detail in the CAO Powerpoint however, I understand that a lot of this information can be overwhelming for you as a parent/guardian so if you feel you need more support regarding any of the above information please email me on guidance@stcaimins.ie to arrange a consultation either over the phone or in person.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and here's hoping there is a better year in store for us all in 2021!

Kind regards,

Hannah Fitzpatrick

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Guidance Counsellor