



St. Columba's College

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INFORMATION  
AND  
GUIDELINES

FOR

PARENTS  
OF  
NEW PUPILS

September 2011



## St. Columba's College

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June 2011

### Introduction

I hope that this booklet helps answer questions you may have about St Columba's and your child. On the first day of term in September, you will be meeting his or her Housemaster/Housemistress, who will obviously be very busy greeting and welcoming new children and their parents; since time is limited, these guidelines should answer some of your queries in advance.

In late August, you will receive by e-mail the 'Green Book', a traditional compendium of information, including a detailed year's calendar, and at the start of term, a paper copy: to tide you over before you receive it, a list of the dates of the start and end of terms, and exeat breaks within them for this coming academic year, is attached with this booklet.

Much of the information contained in this booklet may also be downloaded from our website [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie) - please click on the 'Information' heading on the Home page and from the drop-down menu click on 'Useful Information'. Our website also provides links to several Departmental websites.

This booklet contains general notes for both boarders and day children. In some cases, they obviously do not apply to the latter, but there is a special section for matters of concern to day boarders and day pupils on pages 12 and 13. Also attached with this booklet are the Code of Behaviour and official College Rules, details of our Guidance and Counselling Department, Advice on Bullying and Academic Dates 2011-2012.

Julian Girdham  
Sub-Warden

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**Attachments:** Advice on Bullying  
Code of Behaviour and College Rules  
Guidance and Counselling Department  
Provisional Dates for the Academic Year 2011-2012  
(Amended)

**For details of the School Uniform and Sportswear 2011-2012, please refer to our website [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie) - Information - Useful Information**

**For details of Form Book Lists 2011-2012 please refer to our website [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie) - Information - Book Lists**

## Contact Details

This page lists the main contact numbers you may need before term starts. There is a full telephone directory in the Green Book. Please note that we always appreciate a letter, fax or e-mail to the appropriate person, except when urgent matters require a telephone call.

<b>Warden's Office:</b> Ms Nancy Crisp Ms Emily Bainton	Tel: 01 490 6791 Fax: 01 493 6655 E-mail: <a href="mailto:admin@stcolumbas.ie">admin@stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Bursar:</b> Mrs Sally Gibbs	Tel: 01 493 2860 Fax: 01 493 7690 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bursar@stcolumbas.ie">bursar@stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Matron:</b> Mrs Laura Hanna (Assistant: Ms Lynn Wilson)	Tel: 01 493 3385 and 086 606 9278 E-mail: <a href="mailto:matron@staff.stcolumbas.ie">matron@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Guidance Counsellor:</b> Mr Humphrey Jones	Tel: 087 681 4255 E-mail: <a href="mailto:hjones@staff.stcolumbas.ie">hjones@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Day Boarder/Day Pupil Contact:</b> Dr Garry Bannister	Tel: 01 495 6919
<b>Learning Support:</b> Mrs Frances Heffernan	Tel: 01 495 6907
<b>Linen Room:</b> Mrs Elaine Healy	Tel: 01 495 6906

### **Housemasters and Housemistresses may be contacted at the following telephone numbers/e-mail addresses during term-time:**

<b>Beresford Housemistress:</b> Ms Derarca Cullen (Assistant Housemistress: Mrs. Yvonne Crossey)	Tel: 087 652 8398 E-mail: <a href="mailto:dcullen@staff.stcolumbas.ie">dcullen@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Glen Housemaster:</b> Mr Daron Higgins (Assistant Housemaster: Mr Ronan Swift)	Tel: 087 794 8590 E-mail: <a href="mailto:dhiggins@staff.stcolumbas.ie">dhiggins@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Gwynn Housemaster:</b> Mr Paul Cron (Assistant Housemaster: Mr Tristan Clarke )	Tel: 085 702 1394 E-mail: <a href="mailto:gwynnscc@gmail.com">gwynnscc@gmail.com</a>
<b>Hollypark Housemistress:</b> Dr Mary Singleton (Assistant Housemistress: Ms Julie Robinson)	Tel: 087 794 8592 E-mail: <a href="mailto:hollypark@stcolumbas.ie">hollypark@stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Iona Housemistress:</b> Mrs Donna Sherwood (Assistant Housemistress: Ms. Justyna Pyz)	Tel: 087 794 8596 E-mail: <a href="mailto:donnamsherwood@gmail.com">donnamsherwood@gmail.com</a>
<b>Stackallan Housemaster:</b> Mr Liam Canning (Assistant Housemaster: Mr Michael O'Shaughnessy)	Tel: 01 493 0146 E-mail: <a href="mailto:lcanning@staff.stcolumbas.ie">lcanning@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>
<b>Tibradden Housemaster:</b> Mr Michael Patterson (Assistant Housemaster: Mr William Gibbs)	Tel: 087 631 3618 E-mail: <a href="mailto:mpatterson@staff.stcolumbas.ie">mpatterson@staff.stcolumbas.ie</a>

# Communications

## **How will the College communicate with me?**

We have a commitment to let parents know as much as possible about what is happening in the College. In the next section, 'The House and Pastoral Care', there are details about how to keep in touch with your child's Housemaster/Housemistress. More generally, the College has become a highly sophisticated user of information technology in keeping you informed:-

- the College website, [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie), has a Latest News page which has regular articles on general news, sport, drama, music and more.
- Half-way down the Latest News page, there is a feed with news from our Twitter account (which can also be followed at [www.twitter.com/sccdublin](http://www.twitter.com/sccdublin)). This provides lots of daily information on events, sports matches and results, and changes of routine, and is the *first* place to check for the most immediate and up-to-date information.
- The Warden frequently e-mails parents with news of coming events and matters of general concern and interest.
- Electronic newsletters are sent to all parents (and many others) twice a term. If you have not yet seen one of these, past editions can be read on the right-hand side of the Latest News section of the website. They contain a rich mixture of reporting, pictures and links.
- Departmental websites contain a lot of current information about their areas, especially the English, Science and Art blogs (accessed via the left-hand column on the website).

## The House and Pastoral Care

### **Who will be responsible for my child's welfare?**

The Housemaster/Housemistress is the key person to whom you should address questions, information, requests, concerns, and all other matters of welfare. If anything regarding your child is worrying you, please feel free to discuss it with the Housemaster/Housemistress, as you may often be aware of situations that he/she might be reluctant to mention in school. By the same token, the Housemaster/Housemistress will often be able to put into a clearer perspective difficulties which may be reported at home.

Each House also has an Assistant Housemaster/Housemistress. You will meet both these people on the first day of next term, when you can ask further questions about the House.

### **How should I get in touch with the Housemaster/Housemistress?**

Contact telephone numbers for each House are listed on page 2 of this booklet, and in the Green Book. Of course, most Housemasters and Housemistresses are also busy full-time teachers, and are always grateful if telephone calls can be reserved for urgent concerns: using the ordinary post, e-mail and fax is much appreciated for routine matters. Housemasters and Housemistresses should only be called after your child's normal lights-out time if there is an emergency.

### **How should I get in touch with my child?**

The most direct way is via mobile phone. We have a strict policy that these must always be kept in House, and may never be used elsewhere in the school. They must also be turned off at lights-out, so please do not ring late in the evening.

While mobile phones are of course very handy for communication between parents and children, and can help reassure both that all is well, it is our experience that they can also have detrimental effects. Pupils come to St Columba's to learn independence, among other things, and mobile phones often

undermine these efforts in a boarding school. Adolescents are, of course, at a difficult stage of life, and sometimes react in a volatile but short-lived manner to a particular situation; with mobile phones there is too infrequently a 'cooling-off' period. We encourage our pupils not to worry their parents unnecessarily and to learn to become more self-reliant.

When sending a letter, you should include the title of the House after your child's name: eg *Tom Smith, Glen House, St Columba's College, Whitechurch, Dublin 16, Ireland*. All pupils are provided with a personal e-mail address shortly after the start of term, on request, with the suffix *@stcolumbas.ie*. Pupils can easily access computers with e-mail.

In urgent cases only, a message can be sent via the Housemaster/Housemistress, but please don't use him/her as a regular messaging service...

**How often will he/she see the Housemaster/Housemistress?**

A lot! Formally, each Housemaster/Housemistress holds a daily 'House Business' period, for dealing with routine matters, including requests for exeats. Informally, the Housemaster/Housemistress or House Tutor is always around and available, both during the day and in the evening. We should point out that the teaching staff in St Columba's is close-knit and constantly shares information about pupils, and this is a key way by which Housemasters and Housemistresses build up a rounded picture of the children in their care.

**How often will my child get to see me?**

Boarders have a range of exeat options in each term. All boarders may go out every **Sunday** with their parents (or with other adults who have been approved by both you and the Housemaster/Housemistress). Exeats usually start at 9.45am, or at 11.00am when there is a morning Chapel service. They usually end at 7.30pm before evening Chapel or a function, but occasionally at 8.30pm. These times are all clearly notified in the Green Book.

Boarders are allowed an '**Overnight Exeat**', from Saturday afternoon to Sunday evening. These may be taken by all pupils twice in each of the three terms of the academic year. Your child can thus plan to attend a special family event, and should save an overnight exeat for this purpose. Overnight exeats are not permitted when there is a morning Sunday Chapel service, and again this is noted in the Green Book.

Please do **not** arrange large parties for your child on overnight exeat or Exodus weekends. These are often unsettling and disruptive, and should take place during holidays or half-terms.

Furthermore, several times in the year there is an '**Exodus**': next year's dates are enclosed with this booklet. These are three- or four-day breaks when the whole College closes down, and both pupils and staff take a well-deserved break. No-one may remain in College. Exoduses work on the basis of overseas pupils staying with their guardians, or being invited to the homes of pupils in Ireland. (If you live within reach of the College, please do encourage your child to bring someone home for such weekends.) In the first two terms, we also have lengthy **Half-Terms** when the College is closed.

**Exodus** and **Half-Term** breaks: the times when pupils may leave the College are noted in the Green Book. Please do not arrange transport for them to leave before these times, which are designed to allow pupils to leave sufficiently early to connect to public transport. Increasingly there are easy and inexpensive flight options all over Europe. Please also note the timing of internal College exams; no pupils will be permitted to miss any of these.

**Can I take him/her away at other times during term?**

We discourage this in the strongest terms. Such absences mean that pupils miss part of their schooling, and exceptions damage our sense of community, and often create resentment from peers and frustration for teachers. It is our policy that all pupils should be here from the first day of term to the last. Please do not arrange for your child to leave before the end of term. On rare occasions there may be

requests for leave for special family events (not holidays), and these should be made in writing well in advance to the Housemaster/Housemistress.

Transition Year pupils: breaks within term to go abroad are discouraged, mostly for the reasons outlined above. Planned arrangements for appropriate times in the year may be made according to the guidelines issued separately by the TY Co-ordinator, Mr. Peter McCarthy. There is a work experience week at the start of the Trinity Term, and absence from College at other times for this purpose is strongly discouraged.

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000) it is the responsibility of parents to ensure their children attend school every day unless there is a good reason for absence. Parents are also required to let the school know if and why a child is absent. If a child misses more than 20 days in the school year, the school is obliged to contact the National Educational Welfare Board which will then try to establish a reason for absence; the Board may also send an Educational Welfare Officer to see parents.

**When is he/she allowed out on his/her own?**

Pupils in V and VI form are, on occasion, permitted into Dublin on Sundays without their parents, by arrangement with their Housemaster/Housemistress. All others must be accompanied by their parents. We also have some regulations about visiting those local shops which are within walking distance. We have a system of written exeat slips, which are issued by Housemasters/Housemistresses, and which you must countersign. Also, on occasion, you may find that your child asks you to get in touch with the Housemaster/ Housemistress to agree to an exeat with someone else: this is to make sure that you are happy with such an arrangement.

**What should I do if he/she is not settling in?**

Housemasters and Housemistresses are very experienced at dealing with such problems, so your child's Housemaster/Housemistress is always the first port of call. Children starting a new school, especially if they haven't boarded before, can naturally be uncertain or even homesick. We should point out that this is often short-lived, particularly as friendships develop and pupils settle into the rhythm of the busy life here. You might be well-advised to stand back a little at first, though you should certainly share any genuine anxieties with the Housemaster/Housemistress. The remarks on page 4 about the disadvantages of mobile phones are again relevant here.

**And if he/she finds the rules impossible?**

The formal Code of Behaviour and College Rules are attached with this booklet, and in the Green Book. It is most unusual for pupils to find it impossible to live within the necessary confines of a boarding school. However, it has been known to happen, and inevitably there will sometimes be a pupil in any school who finds it impossible to fit in. The Warden and Housemaster/Housemistress will do their best to alert you to any serious concern they may have during this first year. Similarly, we do appreciate communication from parents about any worries that you may have, for it is only by working closely together that staff and parents can overcome the problems that are bound to occur from time to time in any school community.

**Are parents welcome to visit the College?**

Very much so ... Most of the main events of the school year are in the Green Book, and we hope to see you frequently at Chapel services, sports matches, concerts, performances of plays and so on. Details of special events are sent to you by letter or e-mail. The Parent-Teacher Association also organises functions and meetings, including afternoon tea, coffee mornings, an annual lunch and an Informal dinner.

However, we should point out that frequent and casual visits to see your child are unwise and often unsettling, and of course occasional visits should not take place in class-time or prep. Finally, if you feel the need to discuss a matter with the Warden, please make an appointment with his PA, Ms Emily Bainton.

It is standard boarding school practice that, for the privacy of all children, parents and other visiting adults should not enter any dormitory areas at any time other than at the beginnings and ends of terms when collecting children and their belongings.

**Who needs a ‘guardian’?**

All pupils who live outside the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. **It is a condition of entry that all overseas boys and girls have an adult guardian in Ireland who is the person with whom they can stay during Exoduses and exeats, and who can also be called on when they are ill, or in a disciplinary emergency.** Guardians should also be prepared to take care of any official documentation required, such as visas and passports. Guardians should be over 25 years of age. Older brothers and sisters who are undergraduates at university, for example, are not accepted.

If you do not have any prior connection with Ireland, it is possible to go to a professional guardian agency; we are happy to recommend Mr Stan Ryan, Education & Exchange in Europe Ltd (EDEX), Arena House, Arena Road, Sandyford Business Park, Dublin 18 - Tel: 01 213 0735 Fax: 01 213 0617 E-mail: stan@edex.ie Web: www.edex.ie. The name, address and contact numbers for the guardian must be included on the Contact Details for New Pupils form which will be posted to you.

**Is bullying a problem in the College?**

No school should ever claim it has eradicated nastiness between its pupils. What we can say is that we have a culture which makes explicit its determination to reduce such behaviour to an absolute minimum. Since 1999, we have had a formal Bullying Policy, which is widely publicised in the College, together with a formal process to deal with complaints. All members of our community are encouraged to be alert, and to report any suspicions of bullying behaviour to teachers and senior pupils. Each year we hold a ‘Bullying Awareness Day’. Parents are strongly advised to allow the school to deal with bullying issues and, in particular, of course, not to engage in any way with other parents’ children.

**What should I do if I feel my child is being bullied?**

Please first read the guidelines entitled “What Parents Need to Know”, which is attached with this booklet. Again, you should always deal directly with your child’s Housemaster/Housemistress. Naturally, you should not approach the child of another parent.

**Or might be bullying someone else?**

Once again, you should contact your child’s Housemaster/Housemistress.

**What are the College’s policies on illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco?**

The relevant parts of the College Rules read:

- “3. Pupils are reminded that they must obey the laws of the Republic of Ireland.
4. Possession of illegal drugs and controlled substances is strictly forbidden. Pupils who bring these into school will be required to leave the College; pupils who use such substances inside or outside the College in term-time are also likely to be required to leave.
5. Consumption of alcohol inside or outside the College in term-time is forbidden. Pupils who bring alcohol into the College or return from exeat under its influence are liable to be suspended.
6. Possession and use of tobacco or its derivatives are forbidden inside or outside the College in term-time. Repeated breaking of this rule is likely to lead to suspension.”

**What sort of Career Guidance will he/she get?**

All pupils are assessed at set stages throughout their time at St Columba’s. Mr. Humphrey Jones, the Careers and Guidance Counsellor, together with academic staff and Housemasters and Housemistresses, will give advice to each pupil on the choice of third-level courses, while parents will be informed of proposed subject choices as pupils move up through the school, and their opinions will be invited.

## Academic Questions

### **What subjects will my child study in the first year?**

This depends on which form he/she is entering. The further pupils progress in the College, the more choice they have. Most parents reading these pages will have children entering one of the first three forms – Primary, I or II – and generally the subjects available in these forms are:

English; Mathematics; French; Irish; Latin; History; Science; Geography; Spanish; Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE); Art; Music; Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE); Computer Studies; Classical Studies, Religious Education (RE); Physical Education (PE); Technical Graphics.

### **Who will be keeping an eye on his/her progress?**

Housemasters and Housemistresses, primarily, gather information about the academic standard and progress of the children in their charge. The main medium for this is the regular Effort Mark system in which teachers give grades from 1-5 for each subject. Areas for improvement are also noted when necessary, such as attentiveness, behaviour, prep, organisation, participation in class and punctuality. A sheet summarising your child's Effort Marks will be sent to you at the end of each term. Formal staff meetings, called Conventions, are held every three to four weeks, and these include detailed discussions on the academic and pastoral progress of individual pupils.

### **And if things are not satisfactory?**

One possible short-term measure is a 'Report Card', a sheet of paper which is signed by each teacher after each class, with a brief comment, and is checked by the Housemaster/Housemistress daily. Of course, if the Housemaster/Housemistress feels that this is not having a positive effect, he/she will certainly let you know.

### **How often do I find out about his/her progress?**

There are three formal **Parent-Teacher** meetings during the year, on the afternoons of Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2011, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 and Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2012, all marked in the Green Book.

Full written reports are sent to you at the end of each term, commenting on each academic subject, with further comment by the Housemaster/Housemistress and the Warden, Sub-Warden or Senior Master. These handwritten reports are considered and detailed, and teachers will always point out positive progress, but will also be direct in criticisms when appropriate.

Finally, to give you interim feedback before the reports at the end of the first term, Michaelmas, you will receive a summary of effort marks.

### **I live overseas – when will the report arrive?**

Due to the unpredictable nature of the postal system in some countries, academic reports and accounts can take a long time to reach parents. The holidays are often a good time for pupils to concentrate on areas of study that may require special attention, and so the earlier the reports reach home the better. The College does not fax reports or accounts, so many parents have opted for the DHL service to get their reports and accounts, and this system works very well. The College strongly advises parents who live in countries with poor postal systems to avail of this service, the cost of which can be added to a pupil's account. (Please note that DHL cannot deliver to a PO Box number, so we will need your ordinary residential postal address for this.)

### **When should I talk to individual teachers?**

At the **Parent-Teacher** meetings noted above. However, if you have general concern about your child's academic progress, or live abroad and cannot come to either of the scheduled Parent-Teacher meetings, a special appointment can be made for break-time on a school day (usually 11.00am), when a fair cross-section of your child's teachers can be consulted. Because these teachers are having a brief break during a busy day, such informal consultations will not last long. You should arrange these appointments through the Housemaster/Housemistress in good time.

If you have concern about a particular subject, please always approach the Housemaster/Housemistress first, rather than the subject teacher directly.

**How is Prep organised?**

From Monday to Friday, 'Prep' (usually called 'homework' in most schools) is held each evening for boarders and day boarders. The length of this ranges from 1.5 hours for the youngest pupils to almost 3 hours for Leaving Certificate candidates. All younger pupils are supervised, by a mixture of members of staff and senior pupils, while there is more freedom for V and VI formers, who may also opt to work in the very disciplined environment of the Library.

**What happens if my child has a learning difficulty?**

Our Learning Support Department assesses the literacy of every new pupil in the first few days of term. If this assessment reveals any learning weaknesses, we will be in touch with you straight away. If your child has already been receiving Learning Support at his/her previous school, you should contact Mrs. Frances Heffernan or Ms. Suzanne McEaney who run our Learning Support Department at the College (Tel: 01 495 6907). If he/she has had a professional psychological assessment at a previous school, this should be sent to us by post before term starts.

## Practicalities

**How do I organise my child's uniform?**

The official School Uniform and Sportswear Lists and Prices may be downloaded from the Useful Information page on our website. The **College uniform** may be purchased from Pat O'Farrell Schoolwear, Unit 2, Stillorgan Shopping Centre, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin – Tel: 01 210 8586 [www.patofarrellschoolwear.ie](http://www.patofarrellschoolwear.ie). Purchases can be made online or at the shop. Opening Hours: 9.30am-6.00pm Monday-Saturday. The College **sportswear** must be purchased online from Kukri Sports - [www.stcolumbas.kukrisports.com](http://www.stcolumbas.kukrisports.com).

College gowns, surplices and House ties are available from the Linen Room, run by Mrs Elaine Healy (see page 2). These will be issued to all new pupils at the start of term and will be charged to pupils' accounts.

The Parents' Association operates a Second Hand Uniform Shop at the College. Please contact Mrs. Susan Glennon to arrange an appointment on 087 369 5378 or at [2ndhanduniformSCC@gmail.com](mailto:2ndhanduniformSCC@gmail.com).

All clothing sent for laundering must be suitable for machine-washing, and the College will not be responsible for items which need special care.

**What other clothes should he/she bring?**

Please stick firmly to the Uniform/Clothes List. Pupils have no need for more than one or at the most two sets of casual clothes, and larger quantities create problems in dormitories, where there is limited storage space. The laundry system will run smoothly if this is adhered to, and parents' co-operation is asked for at packing time. Pupils are liable to be asked to send unnecessary items of clothing home.

**How will his/her laundry be identified?**

The importance of Name Tapes on clothes cannot be over-emphasised. Unmarked clothes will not be laundered and will be given to charity if not reclaimed within two weeks. Name Tapes may be ordered from Pat O'Farrell Schoolwear and should be ordered as soon as you receive this booklet. Each name tape should give the pupil's Surname, followed by his/her First Name, e.g. Sparrow, Jack.

**How do I make financial enquiries?**

By getting in touch with the Bursar, Mrs Sally Gibbs. Again, she always prefers the initial contact to be made by letter, fax or e-mail (see page 2).

**How much pocket money should I provide?**

Some Houses operate a House allowance system: this is given to every pupil at the rate of €2 per week which is charged to your account. This is held in the House 'bank' administered by the Housemaster/Housemistress. Anything over this is optional and must be lodged with the Housemaster/Housemistress. Pupils may not have in their possession any more than €20 overnight, and must hand any excess to the Housemaster/ Housemistress for safe keeping. He/she can also advise on what is a suitable termly pocket money sum and you are asked to send money directly to him/her rather than to your child.

**What valuables can he/she bring?**

Electronic items, mobile phones, cameras, watches and pens should not be too valuable, and should be clearly named. No pupil should have costly articles at risk – they will not be covered by College insurance.

**What travel arrangements does the College make?**

Please make all travel arrangements yourself. Please organise any official documentation such as visas and passports well in advance of travel. We will notify you in good time of the dates of the beginning and end of term, and again restate here our policy that pupils must arrive on the first day of term, and leave on the last.

Transport from the Airport to the College is to be organised by parents/guardians. There is a taxi rank outside Dublin Airport. Transport to the Airport may be booked through the Bursar's Office at least 48 hours in advance for exeats and end-of-term travel. Please note that the College is not in a position to offer facilities for the payment (as distinct from the booking) of transport/taxis to Airports/train stations or for any transport not connected with College activities (other than in exceptional circumstances).

Please confirm with the airline company whether or not your child needs to be accompanied when checking-in at the airport, as some companies do not allow minors to check-in unless accompanied by an adult who must sign an indemnity form. If your child needs to be accompanied, please arrange for his/her guardian to organise this.

Boarders should not return to College after an Exodus weekend or holiday break before 6.00pm at the earliest. In the event that anyone arrives prior to this, the College can not be held responsible for them. Also, please label all luggage clearly in block capitals with the owner's name and the College address. A trunk and suitcase or two large suitcases are all that is required.

**How do I organise music tuition?**

This is done through the Director of Music, Mrs Geraldine Malone-Brady, rather than the Housemaster/Housemistress. On the first full day of term, she will see all pupils who wish to have tuition, and will then organise their lessons, mostly by specialised extra music staff. The cost for this varies, and is an 'extra' put onto your account. Once a pupil has signed up for lessons, he/she must complete that term's lessons, for which you will be charged: pupils who 'drop out' during the term will be charged for the entire period.

In September, tutors will be available for: Cello, Clarinet, Flute, Guitar, Organ, Percussion, Piano, Saxophone, Singing, theory, Viola and Violin.

**Can he/she bring a computer to school?**

Many pupils bring laptops; you should consult the Housemaster/Housemistress about security. Pupils may access our wireless network by arrangement with the IT Department. All computers in the College come under the Acceptable Use Policy. This is now available to you to download under 'Information' at [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie). You must sign and return this to the office before the start of term, or if more inconvenient indicate your acceptance of its terms by e-mail to the Director of Information Technology, Mr Scott Crombie, at [scrombie@staff.stcolumbas.ie](mailto:scrombie@staff.stcolumbas.ie). Until Mr Crombie receives your agreement, your child will not be able to use any computer at the College.

## **How do I organise my child's books and stationery?**

The College does not provide text books for pupils. Form book lists are available to download from our website [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie) - *Information - Book Lists* and it is most important that your child has all books by September. Parents of pupils in Forms Primary, I, II and III should note that pupils in these forms are required to come to school in September with a supply of exercise/copy books. 15 such books are recommended at the start of each school year.

Please make sure your child is also fully equipped with the standard range of stationery; some subjects specify particular requirements on the book list, eg Art. There is a stationery supply shop in the nearby Ballinteer Shopping Centre and details of the materials required are provided on the form book list.

## Medical Matters

### **Who looks after his/her health?**

The Matron, Mrs Laura Hanna, and her assistants, Ms Lynn Wilson and Mrs. Rachel Cron, deal with all medical matters relating to pupils, and any absences from College must be reported to them. There are surgeries throughout the day in the Sanatorium, which is a purpose-built house at the top of Hurley Lane. Pupils with an illness or injury may stay and be cared for in one of the two three-bedded units within the sanatorium.

You will be asked to complete a **Medical Record** for your child which will be posted to you. It should be completed very carefully (note in particular the signature needed for permission for emergency treatment at the end of the form). Details of childhood illnesses, surgical and medical history, are most important in the case of a child being referred to hospital. Please ensure vaccinations are up-to-date with boosters given where required and dates noted. Details of medication being taken either regularly or in an emergency are also vital. This includes any alternative medication or treatment that your child might be receiving, since interaction between medications may not just be adverse, but even fatal.

Please do not send your child to College if he/she is feeling off-colour or has been in contact with any infectious disease during the holidays, without first clearing it with the Matron. If your child has been treated by your family doctor in the holidays, please also make sure that Matron is informed.

The College Medical Officer is a local General Practitioner, Dr Alex Khourie, who visits the school for regular surgeries.

### **What if he/she cannot come back to school after an exeat or holiday?**

Parents of boarders should notify the Matron of any absence due to illness, at 01 493 3385 or 086 606 9278, as well as the Housemaster/Housemistress. When your child does return to school after an absence, he/she should bring a written statement of the reason(s) for his/her absence during the relevant period. Please see page 12 for the reporting procedure for day pupils/day boarders.

### **When will I be notified about any illness?**

You will be kept informed if your child is admitted to the Sanatorium or has to receive special treatment. The frequency and promptness of information will depend on the seriousness of the case and you may generally take it that no news is good news. For obvious health reasons, patients in the Sanatorium should not be visited or receive food without Matron's permission.

### **When should I arrange dental appointments?**

In the holidays, please. Where this is not possible, appointments should be made for free time or, failing this, games time in the afternoon, rather than during classes.

## Day Boarders and Day Pupils

*Dr Garry Bannister is the liaison teacher for day pupils/day boarders and their parents. While you will deal mainly with your child's Housemaster/Housemistress, Dr Bannister will be happy to answer queries specifically about day pupil/day boarder routines and issues. He is also the person to whom notification must be given when your child is absent (see below).*

*Times for arrival, collection and prep are summarised on the next page.*

**What's the difference?** Not a great deal – except that day boarders stay later in the day. Day pupils leave before supper, usually from 5.30pm to 5.45pm (4.35pm on half-days), while day boarders stay in school to do their Prep, leaving at a variety of times from 8.00pm to 9.35pm, depending on age. This can be an attractive option, providing a disciplined and structured environment for personal study.

On Wednesdays, Saturdays and other occasional half-holidays, day pupils are collected after House roll-call at 4.35pm. Day boarders may also leave at this time, but may opt to stay in the College until the end of Prep.

**What time does he/she have to come to school?** He/she must report in good time for morning Chapel, in other words by 8.15am, except on Saturdays, when he/she should be here by 8.50am. When staff meet in Convention, school starts late; he/she should report by 9.00am, but may come at the usual time.

**What if he/she cannot come to school?** Please notify Dr Bannister of any absence (including part-days), by ringing 01 495 6919 before 8.45am, and leaving a message on his voice-mail. When your child does return to school after an absence, he/she should bring a written statement of the reason(s) for his/her absence during the relevant period. Certified medical notes should be given to Matron.

**St Columba's is primarily a boarding school: will my child be left out of things?** This is not generally the experience of day boarders or day pupils. Their day is already longer than in most schools, and they take part fully in all sporting and extracurricular activities. They are integrated into boarding houses, and are as fully under the care of the Housemaster/ Housemistress as are boarders. Indeed, we have quite a high 'conversion rate', as many day pupils like what they see, and frequently become boarders in their later years.

**How often will he/she have to come in at weekends?** We do have compulsory Saturday school, of course. Day boys and girls are more than welcome to join in all activities that take place over the weekend, and many do. They also must attend a small number of major school functions. 'Day parents' are often great supporters of weekend and evening functions.

**Do you have a bus service for day pupils?** Yes. The school minibus collects from Killiney DART station at 07.30 Monday to Friday and at 08.00 on Saturdays. It leaves school on the return trip to Killiney station at 17.45 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and at 16.45 on Wednesday and Saturday. The driver is Michael Carroll and his contact number is 087 766 9958. Please contact the Bursar at [bursar@stcolumbas.ie](mailto:bursar@stcolumbas.ie) to sign up for this service.

## Times for Day Boarders and Day Pupils

Special times for beginnings and ends of terms are notified in the Green Book calendar. Changes to routine times are always notified on the Daily Notice in school, which your son/daughter is expected to read every morning: it is his/her responsibility to let you know of such changes. Please also check the Twitter feed on the Latest News page of [www.stcolumbas.ie](http://www.stcolumbas.ie) (see page 4).

There are some weekend and evening functions throughout the year which day pupils and day boarders must attend: these are notified in the Green Book calendar. They include the Senior and Junior plays, and some functions associated with particular forms (such as the House Speech competition for IV form).

Day pupils taking part in evening choir practices and play rehearsals are welcome to come to supper free of charge.

There are two detentions during the week: an academic detention on Saturday at 7.00pm, and a general disciplinary detention on Sunday at 11.15am. Parents of Day pupils who are put in either of these detentions will normally receive a minimum of 48 hours' notice.

### **Morning reporting for all day boys and girls (latest times):**

Monday to Friday	8.15am
Saturday	8.50am
Convention mornings	8.50am

### **Collection times for day pupils:**

	Primary, I, II	III, IV, V, VI
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	5.35pm (after class or games)	5.40/5.45pm (after class or games)
Wednesday, Saturday, Half-holidays	4.35pm (after roll-call in House)	4.35pm (after roll-call in House)

### **Collection times for day boarders:**

Day boarders stay until the end of Prep, which varies by form, as in the table below. On Wednesdays, Saturdays and half-holidays, day boarders may leave at 4.35pm, or may stay until the end of Prep.

<b>Prep ends</b>	
Primary & I	8.00pm
II	8.15pm
III	8.30pm
IV	8.55pm
V	9.20pm
VI	9.35pm