



# FINN VALLEY COLLEGE

COLÁISTE GHLEANN NA FINNE

STRANORLAR · COUNTY DONEGAL



P R O S P E C T U S





School telephone number:

**074 91 31684 / 31355**

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School address:

**Finn Valley College  
Drumboe Lower  
Stranorlar  
Co. Donegal**

Web address:

**[www.finnvalleycollege.donegalvec.ie](http://www.finnvalleycollege.donegalvec.ie)**

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**[finnvalleycollege@donegaletb.ie](mailto:finnvalleycollege@donegaletb.ie)**

School Hours:

**Monday to Friday 9am to 3.55pm**

**Wednesday 9am to 1.15pm**

**Pastoral Care 9am to 9.40am per day**

**Small Break 11am to 11.15am**

**Lunch Break 1.15pm to 1.55pm**

**It is important that all students attend on time each day**

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# Welcome to Finn Valley College



**Alan Thompson**  
*Principal*

Over the next few weeks you are about to make a very important decision that will shape your child's future. I hope that this prospectus will help you to make an informed choice on what is the best school for your child.

Finn Valley College is a small school with big ambitions; it is a school where every child is known by name, where each child receives the teacher's individual attention and where each child is supported throughout their time in our school.

Our prospectus seeks to give you a flavour of the many great things that happen in Finn Valley College; it seeks to inform you of the vast array of supports we have for your child, and, it seeks to provide information all the programmes and courses we provide to meet your child's education needs.

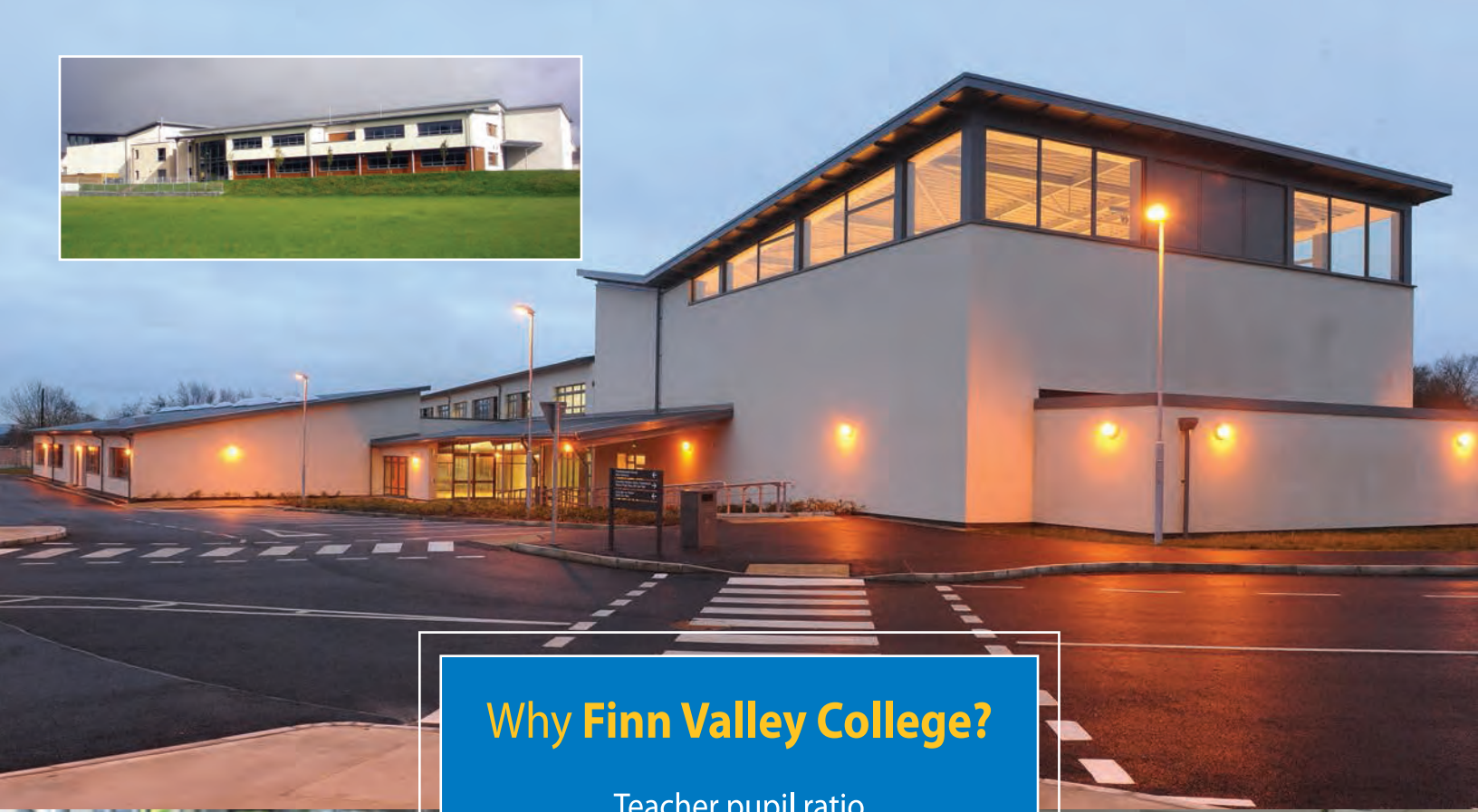


**Kathleen Boland**  
*Deputy Principal*

Our school believes in helping your child reach his or her full potential. Finn Valley College takes great pride in offering a wide range of subjects at all levels including Higher Level in all subjects up to the Leaving Certificate. We also offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities from various sports to cultural activities to ensure your child has a chance to develop new talents.

From the first day - with our induction programme designed to ease the transition from primary school and the internationally recognised and accredited Friends For Life Programme in which all First Years participate - to your child's last day our mission is to help your child have a fulfilling and rewarding educational experience here in Finn Valley College.





## Why Finn Valley College?

Teacher pupil ratio



Academic menu



Pupil-centred focus



Wide range of extracurricular activities



Extensive induction programme for  
first year pupils and parents



Caring Community



Team Teaching







# Senior Management Team



**Angela Ward**  
Home School Liaison Officer



**Bernie Summerville**  
Guidance Counsellor



**Maria Clarke**  
Assistant Principal



**Claire McGranaghan**  
Health and Safety Officer



**Joe O'Donnell**  
Programme Coordinator



**Susan Doyle**  
Administrator





# The Junior Cycle

## Junior Certificate

Students follow a three year course to Junior Certificate Examination.

Students generally study nine subjects to the state examination over a three year period. Only three subjects are now offered at higher level – Irish, English and Mathematics. All other subjects are at common level.

## Junior Certificate Subjects

- English
- Irish
- Maths
- Geography
- History
- Science
- Art
- Technical Graphics
- Business Studies
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Metalwork
- Woodwork
- Spanish
- Home Economics
- Religion
- Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE)
- Physical Education

## Short Courses

- Artistic Performance
- Digital Media Literacy
- ICT

## Junior Cycle Well Being

All 1st year students have one class of study skills per week. All Junior Cycle students have one class of pastoral care each week with their class teacher.

## Junior Cycle English

The new junior cycle will allow students to develop a high quality programme that meets the needs of the students and fits the context, environment and community of the school.

Junior Cycle English was introduced in Finn Valley College in 2014. English in junior cycle aims to develop students' knowledge of language and literacy to consolidate and deepen their literacy skills and make them more self-aware as learners.

There is a strong focus on the oral dimension of language, including the vital importance of learning through oral language. Students will undertake two classroom based assessments, an oral presentation in second year and a collection of texts in third year.





# The Senior Cycle

## Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Thus is the established Leaving Certificate with an additional Enterprise Module comprising of Enterprise Education and Preparation for the world of work. The LCVP yields significant additional points within the CAO system of application for third level places. A distinction is 66 points in the Leaving Certificate Exam.

All subjects are offered at Higher and Ordinary level

## Leaving Certificate subjects

- English
- Irish
- Maths
- Geography
- History
- Biology
- Physics
- Agricultural Science
- Art
- Design Communications and Graphics
- Business
- Engineering
- Construction Studies
- Spanish
- Home Economics
- Enterprise Studies
- Career Guidance

- ICT
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Physical Education

## Leaving Certificate Applied – LCA

The LCA has been running with great success for a number of years in Finn Valley College. The course is in modular form and includes a work experience element. The LCA provides an excellent foundation for those who wish to proceed to apprenticeship training and Post Leaving Certificate courses.

## LCA Modules

- English and Communications
- Maths Applications
- Engineering
- Vocational Preparation and Guidance
- French/Spanish
- Communicative Irish
- Hotel Catering and Tourism
- Work Experience
- Social Studies
- Arts Drama
- Arts Visual
- Physical Education
- Information and Communications Technology
- Agriculture/Horticulture
- Graphics and Construction Studies











# Post Leaving Certificate

Finn Valley College offers three Post Leaving Certificate QQI level 5 courses.

- **Business Administration** - Modules include Text Production, Word Processing, Business Administration Skills, Audio Transcription, Work Experience, Customer Service, Communications and Bookkeeping Manual and Computerised.
- **Sports, Recreation and Exercise** - Modules include Sport and Recreation Studies, Exercise and Fitness,

Communications, Word Processing, Work Experience, Soccer Coaching, Basketball Coaching, Gaelic Football Coaching and Nutrition

- **Early Childhood Care and Education** - Modules include Child Development, Early Care and Education Practice, Early Childhood Education and Play, Child Health and Well Being, Children with Additional Needs, Communications, Work Experience and Word Processing.

## S T U D E N T T E S T I M O N I A L S



**Shannon Kelly (PLC 2013)**  
Currently studying M.A. in NUIG

*"Looking back I am so glad that I chose to do the PLC course at Finn Valley College because it encouraged me to thrive at a 3rd level Institution and the skills I learned have come in so handy for me at college"*



**Mark McKelvey (PLC 2007)**

*"I have nothing but great memories of the PLC course. I recall at that time knowing I was not yet ready for college. Reflecting back, it was the PLC year which helped me develop as a person. I grew in confidence, improved my social skills and learned computer ability which are still of benefit to me. For me the PLC ticks all the boxes"*



**Paddy Kelly (PLC 1999)**  
Currently working in Donegal ETB

*"Doing PLC was the best decision I ever made as it was a stepping stone to gaining full time employment. I obtained skills and knowledge that I still use to this very day. The tutors were excellent; they empowered students to use their own initiative and release their inner skills"*



**Post Leaving Certificate Group 2017**





# Whole School Activities

Finn Valley College has a long tradition of involvement in Whole School Activities (WSA). All students are encouraged to participate in some WSA during the school year in an effort to encourage interaction between students and their peers and students and their teachers. It also fosters team spirit and a sense of achievement outside the academic boundaries. We offer a wide range of WSA to ensure all students are catered for.

## Variety Concert

Every year we host a whole school themed concert in the Balor Theatre that is open to all staff and students. Two nights of song, dance, music and craic. Sure where would you get it?

## Educational School Tour

The European School Tour alternates between Spain and France to enforce the two European languages taught in the school.

## Girls Active Club

### (Donegal Sports Partnership Initiative)

The purpose of this club is to get girls more interested in fitness activities. The girls have participated in a range of activities such as, dance, zumba and boxing to name a few.

## The Christmas Party

This is a long standing tradition in the school. All members of the school community go to a local hotel for a Christmas celebration which includes:

Carol Service, Christmas Dinner, Concert and Disco.

## Sponsored Walk

This is an annual fund raiser in the school. The students are given incentives to collect money for the school. The

walk raises a substantial sum every year due to the hard work of the students and the encouragement of the Class Teachers. All funds raised are used to benefit the students e.g. educational trips.

## Electronic Notice Board

Finn Valley College have a very modern communication system. There are T.V. screens around the college to inform students of college news. The Electronic Notice Board also displays news, photos and feedback of student events and activities.

## Business in the Community

This programme takes place in fourth year. This is called the Skills @ Work Programme and aims to provide students with insights, knowledge and an opportunity to consider the career path that will provide them with a life of fulfillment.

The Company engage in 5 sessions with the students:

1. Company overview
2. 'A Day in the Life'
3. Site Visit
4. CV and interview Skills workshop
5. Mock Interview

Finn Valley College are partnered with SITA

## The School Canteen

Staff and students are now enjoying the new dining experience which is available in our new Finn Valley College. The canteen facilities are subsidised.







# Whole School Activities

## Gaelic, Hurling and Soccer

The school had Gaelic and Soccer Teams. Some of which have been successful in winning Ulster Titles.

## The Singing Club

The Singing Club is open to everyone and consists of both students and staff. Practice is held twice weekly. The Club perform at several important school functions throughout the year.

## Student of the Month

A student from each class is selected and honoured as student of the month. All teachers vote for the student and the successful candidate receives a certificate and book voucher.

## Prize Giving

This is an annual celebration event in which students are recognised and awarded for their academic and social achievements in the past year.

## An Gaisce

Students are encouraged to participate in the Presidents Award – Gold, Silver and Bronze projects take place every year.

## Sports Day

This is a fun day in which the school community are divided into teams based on their locality and they take part in a range of activities on the day. It is highly enjoyed by students and teachers alike.

## Young Enterprise Programme

The Young Enterprise Programme is a 5 week entrepreneurial education programme for primary school

pupils in 5th class. This programme was successfully introduced in 2015 to approximately 250 primary school students in the Finn Valley Area.

The purpose of the programme in 2017 is to promote enterprise education in 5th class at primary level, introducing students to idea generation and the many aspects of setting up and running a business. The emphasis of this innovative programme is on active participatory learning and teamwork, opening the minds of primary school pupils to the joy of entrepreneurship.

Finn Valley College Business Teacher, Ashlean Mc Geehan, and her 4th year business students visit and mentor students in 10 participating primary schools in the Finn Valley area. Then meeting on a weekly basis, the mentor team visit the students within their classroom environment and prepare them for the final Dragons Den style competition in Finn Valley College.

## School Bank

Senior cycle students will get involved in setting up and managing the day-to-day operations of a school bank. The team will be involved in all aspects of running the school bank, and, in doing so, they will learn about the following:

- Marketing
- Money Management
- Regular savings
- Customer service
- Management and team work
- Personal development and presentation skills
- Security, data protection and compliance







# The School Community

## School Policies

We have implemented a number of policies which can be requested for viewing by a parent:

Some examples are:

Admissions Policy

Code of Behaviour

SPHE Policy

Guidance Plan

School Self Evaluation

One of the important ones for students is:

## The Code of Behaviour

The schools Behaviour Management Plan is based on RESPECT

Respect for each other

Respect for teachers and staff

Respect for the school building and equipment.

## Gaeltacht Scholarship

Muinteoiri Gaeilge enter students in a competition for a Scholarship to the Gaeltacht to improve their spoken Irish.

## Travel Scholarship to Lourdes

Finn Valley College funds students to participate as volunteers in the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Our Parents Association fund the scholarship.

## Board of Management (BOM)

The school has a BOM which consists of:

Parents Representatives

VEC Representatives

Teachers Representatives

The BOM works to agree policies and school management issues.

## The Student Council

This is a body of students voted by the students to represent them in school matters. The Student Council is a mirror image of the Board of Management. The role of the Student Council is to consult with the Principal on all school matters.

The school has also been successful in securing a student representative on the County Donegal Youth Council.







# The School Community

## Home School Links

Without the interest and co-operation of parents, the best efforts of the school can be in vain. Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to arrange to meet teachers.

Regular communication between parents and teachers occurs via the student diary. This ensures parents are kept regularly informed of their child's progress at school.

The school may be contacted any time during the year on an appointment basis.

Subject Teachers and the Class Teacher will make and receive notes to parents on an ongoing basis throughout the year

The School may also send Text messages to parents regarding important and urgent matters.

Formal Parent Teacher Meetings take place throughout the school year.

School reports are posted to parent's bi-annually.

Information Evenings are organised for parents on topics such as: new first year students, subject choices and many more.

## Book Rental Scheme

Finn Valley School has a very successful book rental scheme in operation which substantially reduces the cost of text books for parents. The books are returned at the end of the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate.

To reduce the weight of school bags, our college has a set of text books for most subjects in the classroom.

## Parents Association

An active parent association is vital to the life of any school. The association fosters cooperation between school and home and promotes the educational welfare and interests of students.

The Parents Association meet throughout the year and work closely with the Principal.

*"As a parent of two very happy and content FVC students I couldn't praise enough the professionalism and care the teachers and staff have shown to everyone in their care. They expect the best from students and in return give back 100%."*

**Jacqueline McElchar, Parent**







# Our Educational Support Services

## Special Educational Needs

Students who are determined to require additional learning support are allocated extra tuition as appropriate from our specialised team led by the Assistant Principal in charge of this area. The learning support programme aim to improve Literacy, Numeracy and Social Skills.

## Autistic Spectrum Disorder Department (ASD)

Finn Valley College is one of the leading schools in Donegal with a specialised ASD Department. Our trained specialists lead in the education of students with ASD who come to us from over a 50km range.

## Student Support Team

The school has a dedicated Pastoral Care Team led by an Assistant Principal and Class Teachers. Each student group meets with their Class Teacher for ten minutes every morning in a bid to provide a supportive and positive environment for all students.

The Pastoral Care system in the school includes a dedicated Care Team who take responsibility for the extra pastoral care of individual students when the need arises. This team will also take charge should there be a Critical incident relating to our College.

## Parent Teacher Meeting

Regular parent Teacher Meetings are held within the school. Parents are welcome in our school and they can be assured that we are always delighted to see them.

## Induction Programme for First Year Pupils

We have an extensive Induction Programme for first year students which include:

- National School Visits
- Open Day

- Open Night
- Induction Programme (2 days during the Easter Holidays)
- Subject Tasters
- Information Evening for Parents of First Years
- Parent Teacher meeting in the first term

We take pride in caring for the students and their parents.

## School Completion Programme (SCP)

The SCP is designed to support students to remain at school until they have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate. Our College actively promotes the retention of all students at school until the Leaving Certificate is completed.

## Home School Community Liaison Officer (HSCLO)

The HSCLO offers support to parents in the form of home visits providing help and advice for parents and running courses to meet the needs of the parents. The HSCLO also offers support to students having difficulties in school. The HSCLO liaises with the community and community organisation in an active manner.

## Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)

The SPHE programme provides students with the skills to cope appropriately with life-long issues including relationships, well-being, physical health and mental health.

## Health Promotion Schools

This initiative encourages students, staff and families to take an interest in their wellbeing. A committee of students organises activities and events to promote a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle.







**Early Childhood Care and Education Class**



**Sports, Recreation and Exercise Class**





Drumboe Lower, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal

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**etb**

Bord Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Dhúna na nGall  
Donegal Education and  
Training Board

Finn Valley College operates under the patronage of Donegal ETB which  
has been offering excellence in education for over 100 years.