

# New Junior Cycle – Information for Parents

## Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year Cohort - September 2017

### **General Information**

The new junior cycle allows for new ways of learning and a broader range of skills to be properly assessed. The aim is to place **the student at the centre of the learning process**.

### **Principles, Key Skills and Statements of Learning**

Underpinning the new junior cycle are a set of principles, key skills and statements of learning. These will ensure that your child receives a rich educational experience that has both breadth and depth.

Your child will have access to a varied curriculum of knowledge, skills and values.

### **Principles**

Eight principles underpin the framework for Junior Cycle. These inform the planning for, as well as the development and implementation of, junior cycle programmes in all schools. The eight principles of Junior Cycle are:

1. Learning to Learn
2. Choice and Flexibility
3. Quality
4. Creativity and Innovation
5. Engagement and Participation
6. Continuity and Development
7. Inclusive Education
8. Wellbeing

## Skills

Eight skills permeate across the entire curriculum. The skills are:

1. Being Literate
2. Managing Myself
3. Staying Well
4. Managing Information and Thinking
5. Being Numerate
6. Being Creative
7. Working With Others
8. Communicating

Eight key skills permeate across the entire curriculum



Engagement with these skills across the curriculum will enable students to:

- be more actively engaged with learning
- take greater ownership of their learning
- have a critical engagement with digital technology
- be encouraged to problem solve and think creatively

## Statements of Learning

There are twenty-four statements of learning which describe what your child should know, understand and value having participated in junior cycle. All statements of learning will be addressed in the curriculum offering of the school.

The statements of learning are as follows:

SOL 1	Communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1
SOL 2	Listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2 and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to his or her ability.
SOL 3	Creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts.
SOL 4	Creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved.
SOL 5	Has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making.
SOL 6	Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and cultures in which he/she lives.
SOL 7	Values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts.
SOL 8	Values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.
SOL 9	Understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around him/her.
SOL 10	Has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably.
SOL 11	Takes action to safeguard and promote his/her well-being and that of others.
SOL 12	Is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active.
SOL 13	Understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices.
SOL 14	Makes informed financial decisions and develops good consumer skills.

SOL 15	Recognises the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning.
SOL 16	Describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships.
SOL 17	Devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills.
SOL 18	Observes and evaluates empirical events and processes and draws valid deductions and conclusions.
SOL 19	Values the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal social and global importance.
SOL 20	Uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge.
SOL 21	Applies practical skills as he/she develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies.
SOL 22	Takes initiative, is innovative and develops entrepreneurial skills.
SOL 23	Brings an idea from concept to realisation.
SOL 24	Uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work, and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.

## Subjects

Each junior cycle subject has a new specification which will replace what was previously known as a syllabus. Each specification describes the learning that will take place as part of the student's study of a subject in junior cycle. By 2019 all new subject specifications will have been introduced. Students can study a maximum of 10 subjects for the JCPA.

## Implementation of New Subject Specifications

New subject specifications will be implemented on a phased basis.



## **Assessment**

Junior cycle students will receive a new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

The JCPA will reflect a much wider range of your child's achievements over the three years of junior cycle. The JCPA will report on a number of areas, including:-

1. Subjects
2. Classroom Based Assessments
3. Other Learning Experiences

## **Grading**

The state examination that students sit in their subject at the end of their junior cycle will also be graded differently. Instead of A, B, C, D, E, F and NG the following descriptors will now be used:

<b>Distinction</b>	<b>90 to 100 %</b>
<b>Higher Merit</b>	<b>75 to 89 %</b>
<b>Merit</b>	<b>55 to 74 %</b>
<b>Achieved</b>	<b>40 to 54 %</b>
<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>20 to 39 %</b>
<b>Not Graded</b>	<b>0 to 19 %</b>

## **Classroom Based Assessments**

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and skills in ways not possible in a pen and paper examination, for example,

their verbal communication and investigation skills. CBAs will be undertaken in subjects and will be facilitated by the classroom teacher. CBAs will be undertaken during a defined time period within normal class contact time and to a national timetable. Students will complete one CBA in second year and one in third year. Once the second CBA is completed students in third year will complete a written Assessment Task. This task, set by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), is undertaken during normal class time and will be sent to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for marking. This Assessment Task will be worth 10% of the overall mark in the case of most subjects. At the end of third year, students will sit the final SEC examination in June. CBAs will be reported on in the JCPA using the following descriptors:-

- Exceptional
- Above Expectations
- In Line with Expectations
- Yet to Meet Expectations

### **Other Learning Experiences**

Students will have the opportunity to engage with a range of other learning experiences as part of their junior cycle programme and these can be recorded on the JCPA. Other learning experiences play a critical role in ensuring that students are provided with a broad and balanced educational experience. These learning experiences could include student engagement in a science fair, a musical performance or a debating competition for example. They could also include extracurricular activities, such as membership of the school student council, school clubs/societies or participation in school sporting activities. We also run a number of activity weeks in our school throughout the year. Participation in these activities is also considered other learning experiences. The activity weeks run include French Week,

Healthy Living Week, Anti-bullying Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Maths Week and Science Week.

### **Student Wellbeing**

Your child's wellbeing is of central importance to his/her educational success and overall happiness. As a result, Wellbeing will become a core part of your child's junior cycle experience. This area of learning includes, amongst others:

- Physical Education
- Civic, Social and Political Education
- Social, Personal and Health Education (including Relationship and Sexuality Education)
- Guidance
- 1<sup>st</sup> Year Bonding Trip
- TY/1<sup>st</sup> Year Buddy System
- School Activity Weeks:
  - Healthy Living Week
  - Mind Your Head Week
  - Anti-bullying Week
  - Various Subject Specific Weeks

### **Further Information**

This information will be updated as we continue to develop our Junior Cycle programme. We welcome any observations and/or questions that you may have. You can contact our school by email; [info@ccn.ie](mailto:info@ccn.ie) or by telephone; 021-4884104.

