



THE JUNIOR CYCLE PROGRAMME

Junior Cycle places the 21st Century student at the centre of the educational experience. It enables them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives.

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 our students receive a rich educational experience that has both breadth and depth. Each student will have access to a varied curriculum of knowledge, understandings, skills and values.

Eight principles underpin the framework for Junior Cycle. These inform the planning for, as well as the development and implementation of, programmes in all schools.

The eight principles of Junior Cycle are:

- Learning to Learn
- Choice and Flexibility
- Quality
- Creativity and Innovation
- Engagement and Participation
- Continuity and Development
- Inclusive Education
- Wellbeing

Eight key skills permeate across the entire curriculum:



- BEING LITERATE
- MANAGING MYSELF
- STAYING WELL
- MANAGING INFORMATION AND THINKING
- BEING NUMERATE
- BEING CREATIVE
- WORKING WITH OTHERS
- COMMUNICATING

Through engaging with the key skills students will:

- 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 critically and creatively

Twenty four statements of learning describe what a student should know, understand and value having participated in Junior Cycle. Our school will ensure that these statements of learning feature significantly in our programmes.

THE INTRODUCTION OF SUBJECTS SPECIFICATIONS

Subject specifications were implemented on a phased basis from 2014-2015. All subjects, studied in Loreto Abbey other than Religious Education, will follow the revised specifications from September 2018 with the revised course available for R.E. from September 2019.

Ten subjects are assessed for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement and are graded according to the following descriptors:

Distinction	90% to 100%
High Merit	75% to 89%
Merit	55% to 74%
Achieved	40% to 54%
Partially achieved	20% to 39%
Not graded	0% to 19%

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 e.g. their verbal communication, and investigation skills. CBAs will be undertaken in all subjects during a defined time period within normal class contact time to a national timetable. They will be facilitated by the class teacher.

Students will complete one CBA in Second Year in each subject, followed by a second one in Third Year. CBAs will be reported on in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement using the following descriptors:

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

Once the second Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) is completed, students in Third Year will complete a written Assessment Task on what they have learned and the skills and competencies that they have developed in that assessment. 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 account for 10% of the overall mark for the final examination.

Specific arrangements are made for Visual Art, Music and Home Economics. At the end of the Third Year, students will sit the final SEC examination in June, for 2 hours, which will account for 90% of the SEC grade. All subjects, other than Irish, English and Maths will be examined in common level papers.

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 Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement. 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 musical programme, a debating competition and Y.E.S., membership of the student council and in sporting activities.

REPORTING IN JUNIOR CYCLE

A new reporting structure at Junior Cycle will contribute to the personal and educational development of students. It will support and underpin ongoing learning and assessment.

Loreto Abbey will regularly:

- Provide new information to parents about their daughters' achievement and progress in term reports
- Support students in their learning by suggesting next steps and providing feedback to help students' self-confidence

WELLBEING

As part of the Junior Cycle students will experience a new area of learning called Wellbeing. Through the Wellbeing programme students will gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills to enable them to protect and promote their own wellbeing and that of others.

- The four main pillars of the Wellbeing programme are: Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), Physical Education (PE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Guidance Education.
- Other subjects, short courses and units of learning will also contribute to a school's Wellbeing programme.

For more information on the Junior Cycle, please visit www.curriculumonline.ie