



St Columba's College

Junior Cycle Reform

2021-2022

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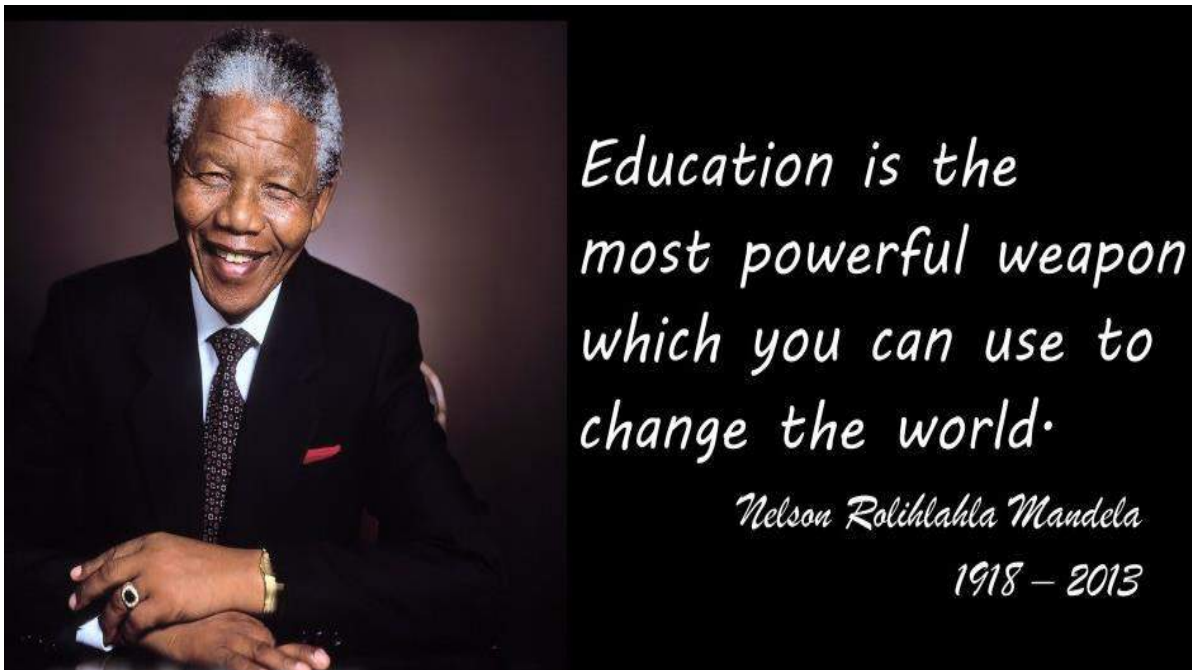
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1) Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present information about the main changes associated with the new Junior Cycle and to highlight changes in teaching methodologies, assessment and grading terminology.

It aims to provide an overview by focusing on the following key areas:

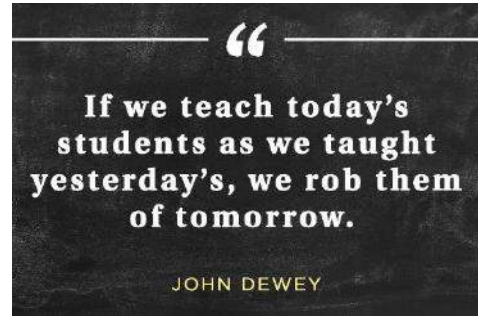
1. Why Change?
2. Structure of the Junior Cycle
3. Junior Cycle Subjects
4. Assessment – A Changing Culture
5. Reporting



2) Why Change?

Why change from the Junior Certificate?

- ✓ The Junior Certificate is examination-based.
- ✓ Rote learning and 'teaching to the test'.
- ✓ Major focus on the end result.
- ✓ The teaching methodology is often didactic: teacher tells – student listens.



ROTE
LEARNING



LEARNING BY
DOING



LEARNING FOR
UNDERSTANDING

Why change to the Junior Cycle?

- The new Junior Cycle provides a **broad education** for your child.
- The new Junior Cycle places **the student experience at the centre** of the learning process.
- It allows for **more varied ways of learning** and a **wider range of skills** to be explored and assessed.



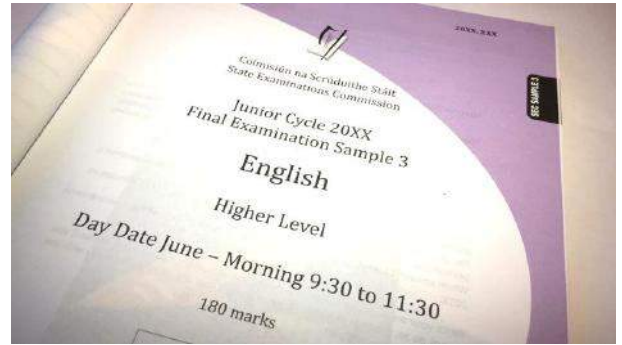
What stays the same?

- Students experience a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Standards and expectations remain high.
- Subjects continue to play an important role in the Junior Cycle.
- The Department of Education and Skills will monitor quality across all schools.
- The State Examinations Commission will continue to be involved in assessment for certification.



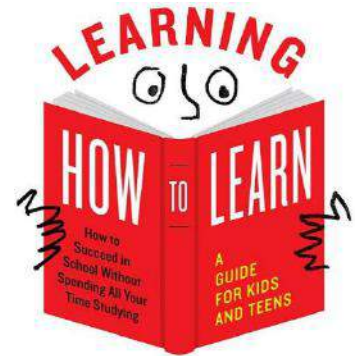
What is improving?

- **Reduction** in number of subjects.
- **Updated** subject specifications.
- An emphasis on **key skills** and preparation for life
- **Reduction** in duration of state examinations
- **Ongoing assessment** to support learning
- **Quality reporting** to parents and students



What is the purpose of education in Junior Cycle?

1. Help students become better learners – greater engagement in the learning process.
2. Help students develop a love of learning and ownership of learning.
3. Provide a solid foundation for further study.
4. To develop skills – creativity, innovation and critical thinking **for learning and for life.**
5. To support learning through improved reporting to students & parents.



What are the key messages?

Balance between knowledge and skills

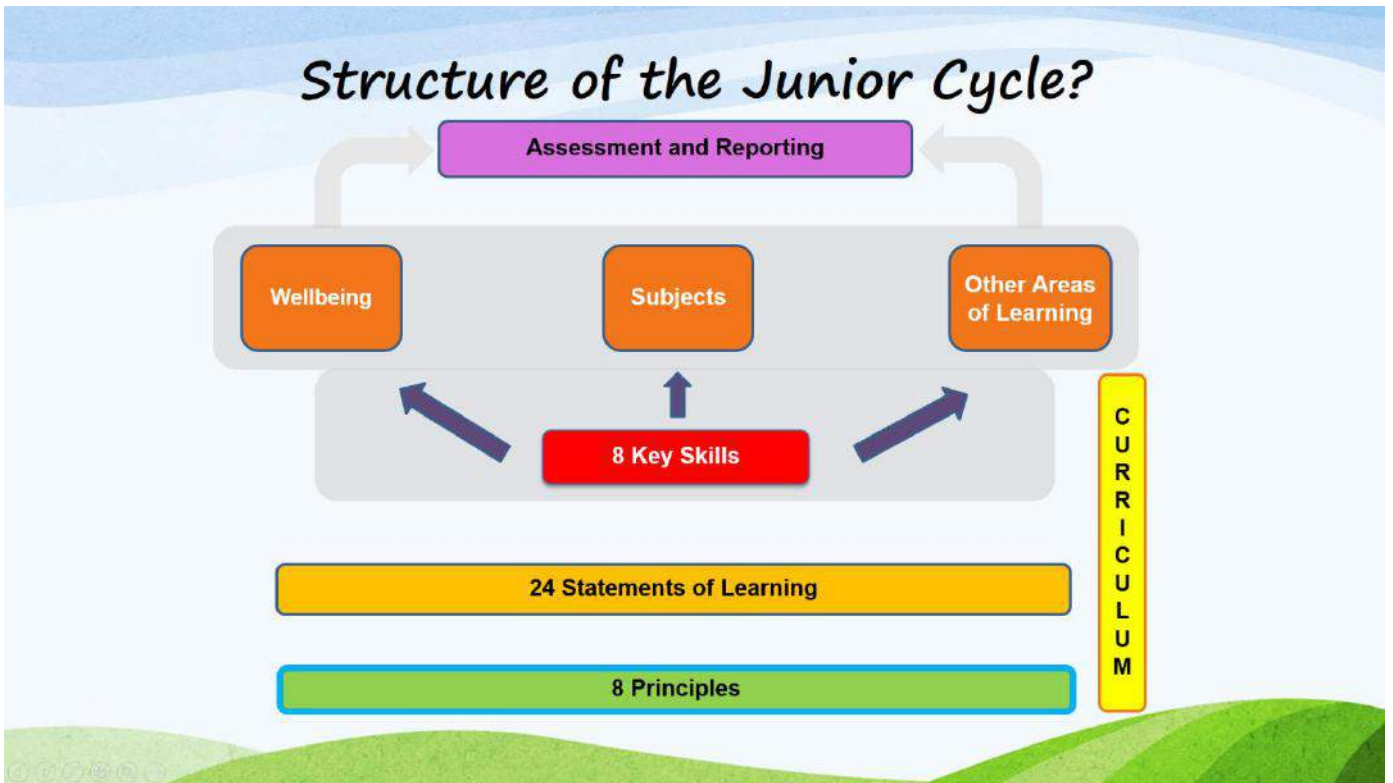
Dual approach to assessment

Reporting a broader picture of learning

Student wellbeing is central to the Framework

Supporting continuity and learning - building on primary school

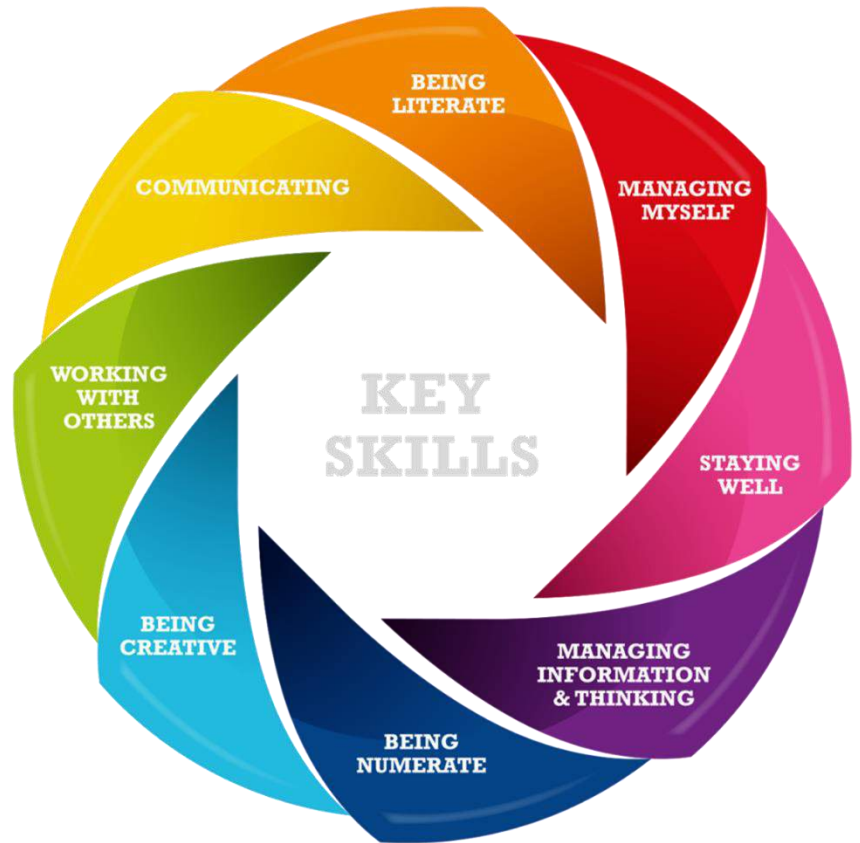
3) Structure of the Junior Cycle



8 Key Skills

Within the Junior Cycle curriculum as a whole, students will develop eight key skills.

1. Managing Myself
2. Staying well
3. Managing Information & Thinking
4. Being Numerate
5. Being Creative
6. Working with others
7. Communicating
8. Being Literate



By engaging with the key skills in all areas of the curriculum students will:

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

Implementing the new Junior Cycle in the classroom is focused on providing learning opportunities for students to learn, practice and develop these key skills over time.

Statements of Learning

There are twenty-four statements of learning, which describe what each student should know, understand and value having participated in a three-year Junior Cycle programme. Through the full curriculum, students will have the opportunity to engage with each of the statements of learning.

Examples:

Statement of Learning 1

Communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts.

Statement of Learning 6

Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which he/she lives.

Statement of Learning 11

Takes action to safeguard and promote his/her wellbeing and that of others

Statement of Learning 17

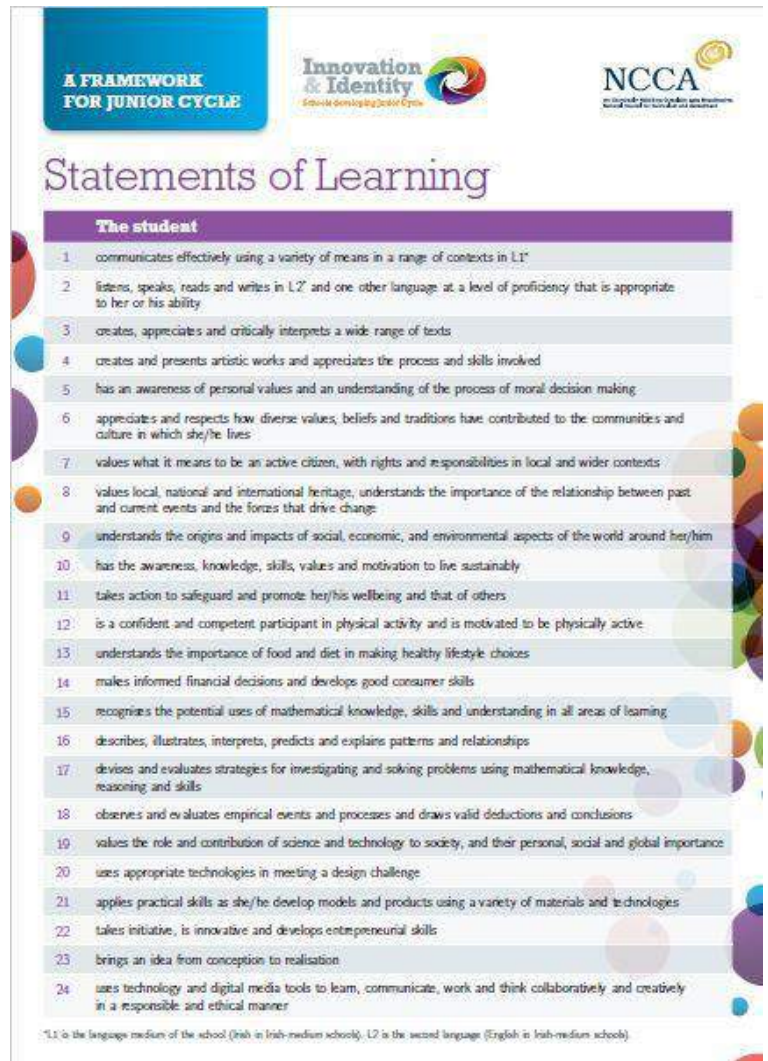
Devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills.

Statement of Learning 21

Applies practical skills as she/he develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies.

Statement of Learning 24

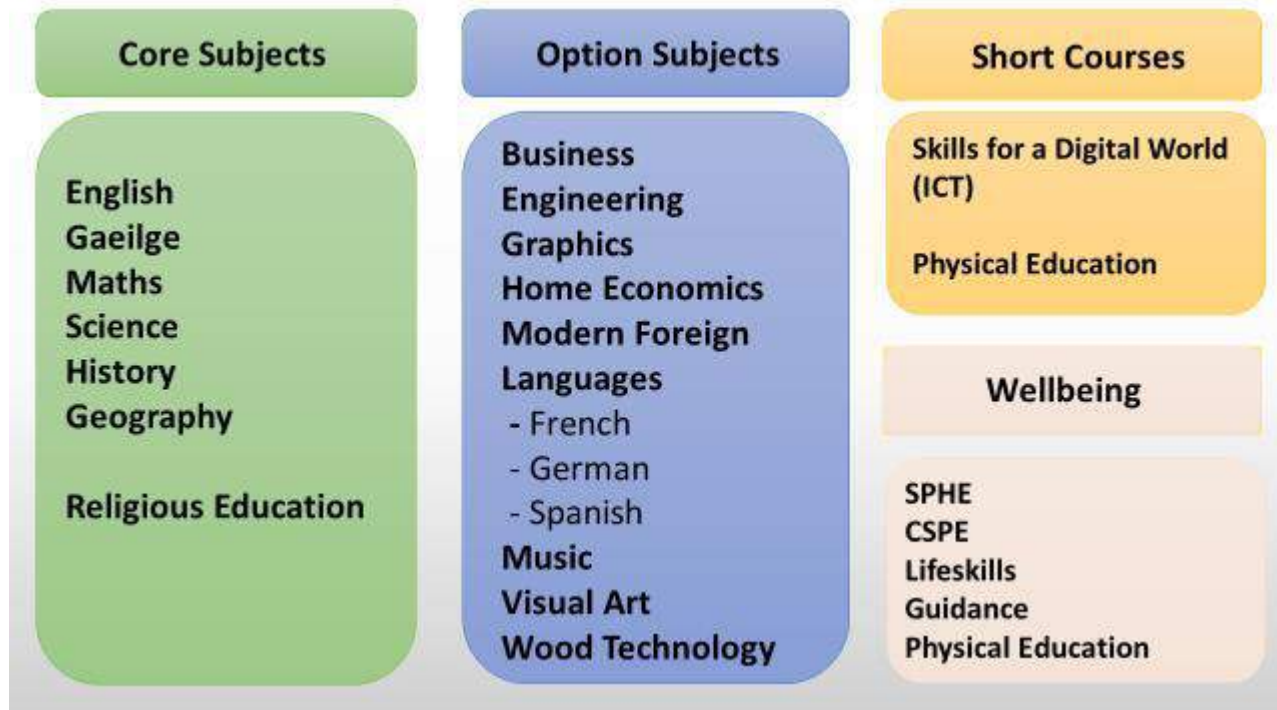
Uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.



4) Junior Cycle Subjects

New subject specifications have been implemented in schools on a phased basis.

All Junior Cycle students 2022 onwards, are following new subject specifications in their chosen subjects.



In St. Columba's College, students in Junior Cycle currently **study 9 subjects, 2 short courses, Wellbeing and Religious Education.**



Wellbeing

Your child's wellbeing is of central importance to their educational success and overall happiness.

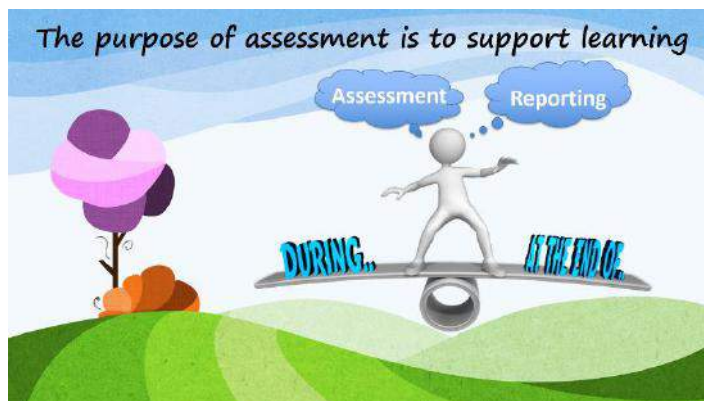
Wellbeing is now a core part of your child's Junior Cycle experience.

From September 2023 students will have 400 hours of wellbeing related learning over the course of their 3 years.

5) Assessment – A Changing Culture

Engagement with a variety of learning experiences and different approaches to assessment will provide a broader picture of student learning, throughout the 3 years of Junior Cycle.

- Assessment in support of learning
- Assessment focused on offering effective feedback
- Greater variety of assessment activity - “fit for purpose” and relevant to students
- Teachers talking to teachers about assessment
- Students reflection on the learning



Assessment in Junior Cycle:

- 1) Formative Assessment - ongoing
- 2) Classroom Based Assessments (CBA's) – 2nd and 3rd Year
- 3) Assessment Tasks – 3rd Year
- 4) Practical Examinations – 3rd Year
- 5) State Examinations in June – 3rd Year

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)

During 2nd and 3rd year, Junior Cycle students will undertake CBAs in their chosen subjects. Students will complete one CBA in second year and one in third year in most subjects. These are facilitated by the subject teacher and take place during class time, following a national timeframe. Upon completion of each CBA, the relevant subject teachers meet to discuss the quality of the work. They apply subject specific criteria, known as 'Features of Quality', to each assessment and award it a grade descriptor.

The features of quality are externally set, by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). CBAs will be reported on in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) using the following descriptors:

- Exceptional
- Above Expectations
- In Line with Expectations
- Yet to Meet Expectations
- Not Reported

Classroom-Based Assessments will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in a way which would not be possible in a formal examination. The tasks will cover a broad range of activities including: oral presentations, written work of different types, practical or designing and making activities, artistic performances, scientific experiments, research projects. A particular purpose of the Classroom-Based Assessments will be to facilitate developmental feedback to students.

Classroom Based Assessments – Ensuring Quality

- Schools will organise 'Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR)' meetings.
- Teachers will compare their assessment of students' work and ensure a common approach across the school.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) will be provided for teachers to ensure that the Classroom-Based Assessments align to a national standard.

Assessment Tasks

Once Classroom-Based Assessment 2 is completed, students in third year will sit a written reflective Assessment Task on what they have learned, the skills and competences developed during CBA 2. The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher, during a specified week in accordance with NCCA timeframe.

Assessment Tasks (10% of Final Subject Grade) are marked by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) along with the final exam in June of third year.

Practical Examinations

Subjects that have a State Examinations Commission Practical Examination towards the end of 3rd year - DO NOT have an Assessment Task – the CBA 2 instead links into elements of the practical exam.



Visual Art – 100%
Music - 30%
Home Economics – 50%
Engineering – 70%
Wood Technology – 70%
Graphics – 30%

State Examinations

Exams will be set, held and marked by the State Examinations Commission in June of third year.

- English, Irish and Maths specified at Higher and Ordinary levels
- All other subjects specified at a Common Level
- Short courses do not have a written exam
- Duration of 2 hours or less
- Examination in June will account for 90% of the grade in all subjects without a practical examination.

Assessment Changes for 3rd Year Students

2021/2022 ONLY

Our 3rd Year students in St. Columba's College have had adjustments made to the normal Junior Cycle Assessment for this year only.

- There will be **no Assessment Tasks** in any subject this year for 3rd Years – which under normal circumstances would be awarded 10% of the final grade. This means new Junior Cycle written papers in English, Maths, Science, Business, History and Geography will be worth 100% of the grade for 2021/22. Gaeilge and Modern Foreign Languages written and aural papers will be worth 100% of the grade for 2021/22.
- The required **number of CBA's to be completed has been reduced** – 3rd Year students have already completed CBA's in PE, History, Business Studies, Geography and will not be required to complete another CBA in these subjects this year.
- 3rd Year students **will be required to complete one CBA** in each of the following subjects this year – English (CBA1), Modern Foreign Languages (CBA1), Gaeilge (CBA2), Science (CBA2), Skills for a Digital World (CBA1) and Maths (CBA2).
- In the practical subjects (**Home Economics, Visual Art, Music, Engineering, Wood Technology and Graphics**), students are required to complete CBA2 as they are needed in the preparation of their final Practical Examination element.

6) Reporting in the New Junior Cycle

Junior Cycle will build on reporting currently carried out at Primary level. Schools will regularly provide information to parents about their child's achievement and progress. Teachers will support students in their learning by suggesting next steps and providing feedback to help students' self-evaluation. Reporting will happen in first, second and third-year.

Reporting occurs on an ongoing basis in the Homework Journal, Parent Teacher Meetings and Term Reports. CBA's descriptors will be reported within 2 weeks of the SLAR completion on the VSware system. Teachers will input descriptors and feedback for the CBA online and parents/ guardians will be able to log on in the normal manner to VSware and access the CBA descriptors.

The reporting process at Junior Cycle will culminate in the award of a certificate to students of their achievement in Junior Cycle. This is called the **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.

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement includes:

1. SEC State Examinations Results

Each subject is listed with the grade achieved.

Junior Cycle	
Percentage	Grade Descriptor
≥ 90 to 100	Distinction
≥ 75 to < 90	Higher Merit
≥ 55 to < 75	Merit
≥ 40 to < 55	Achieved
≥ 20 to < 40	Partially Achieved
≥ 0 to < 20	Not Graded (NG)

2. Classroom Based Assessments

The descriptors awarded for each subject and short courses Classroom Based Assessment are listed on the JCPA.

3. Wellbeing

Wellbeing, CSPE, SPHE and Religious Education are among the areas reported here.

4. Other Areas of Learning

Students have the opportunity to engage with a range of other learning experiences as part of their Junior Cycle programme in St. Columba's College, and these can be acknowledged and recorded on the JCPA.

This information is collected towards the end of 3rd year by the JCT Coordinator.

JUNIOR CYCLE PROFILE OF ACHIEVEMENT 2017

John Kelly DOB: 21 June 2001

STATE CERTIFIED FINAL EXAMINATIONS
Examination number: 456085

English (O)	Distracted
Irish (O) (2)	B
Mathematics (H)	B
History (H)	C
Geography (H)	D
French (O) (2)	C
Business Studies (H)	B
Science (H)	B
Technology (H)	B
C.S.P.E. (C)	A
Religion (H)	A

Classroom-Based Assessments - English

Oral Communication	Exceptional
Collection of Texts	Exceptional

Classroom-Based Assessments - Short Courses

Coding	Above expectations
Physical Education	Exceptional

Other Areas of Learning

Principal: Ms Mary Ryan
Year Head: Mr. Jack Quigley
Roll Number: 60090Q
Anytown Secondary School, Anytown, Co. Anytown, V94 HXW5

This JCPA recognises and records achievements in Junior Cycle.

Students in St. Columba's College are involved in a huge range of activities and achievements which are acknowledged on the JCPA. These include: Athletics, Rugby, Soccer, Gaelic, Hurling, Golf, Basketball, Girls Active, Musical, Talent Show, CSPE Action Project, MS Readathon, Make-A-Book Competition, Art Competitions, Shoe Box Appeal, Debating, County and National Math/ Business / Science Quizzes, Bake Off Competitions, Enterprise Projects, Scratch, VEX Robotics, Christmas Charity Appeals, Green Schools Committee, Student Council, Class Prefect, Global Citizen Committee, Sports Council, to name a few!

And to conclude....

*We are mindful that Junior Cycle is **New** to Students; **New** to Parents and Guardians; and **New** to Teachers. We as a whole school community have to support and encourage are children, students and each other through this change. We need to demonstrate a model of interest in learning, support projects and homework - to encourage pride in their progress and work. The focus of Junior Cycle is on the continuous learning experience of our children over three years therefore, attendance at school plays a vital role.*

Mistakes made in a positive environment provide wonderful learning opportunities

APPENDIX I

2 nd Year Junior Cycle 2023 – CBA 1 Schedule							
October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
27 th – 1 st Oct	1 st – 5 th Nov Home Ec. History	29 th – 3 rd Dec	6 th – 7 th Jan Home Ec. Visual Art	31 st – 4 th Feb Visual Art MFL Wood Tech.	28 th – 4 th March Visual Art Business Graphics	28 th – 1 st April English Maths	2 nd – 6 th May Science PE Music
1 st – 8 th Oct	8 th – 12 th Nov Home Ec. History	6 th – 10 th Dec Home Ec. Geography	10 th – 14 th Jan Home Ec. Visual Art Engineering	7 th – 11 th Feb Visual Art MFL Wood Tech. Business	7 th – 11 th March Visual Art Business Graphics English	4 th – 8 th April Maths Science PE	9 th – 13 th May PE Music
11 th – 15 th Oct	15 th – 19 th Nov Home Ec. History	13 th – 17 th Dec Home Ec. Geography	17 th – 21 st Jan Home Ec. Visual Art Engineering	14 th – 18 th Feb Visual Art MFL Wood Tech. Business	14 th – 18 th March Visual Art Graphics English	11 th – 22 nd April Easter Holidays	16 th – 20 st May
18 th – 22 nd Oct	22 nd – 26 th Nov Home Ec. Geography	20 th – 22 nd Dec 23 rd – 5 th Jan Christmas Holidays	24 th – 28 th Jan Home Ec. Visual Art Engineering	21 st – 25 th Feb February Midterm	21 st – 25 th March Graphics English Maths	25 th – 29 th April Science PE Music	23 th – 27 th May
25 th – 29 th Oct Halloween							

APPENDIX II

3 rd Year Junior Cycle 2022 – CBA Schedule								
September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
30 th - 3 rd Sept	27 th – 1 st Oct Visual Art CBA2 English CBA1 Wood Tec CBA2 Graphics CBA2 Engineer CBA2	1 st – 5 th Nov Visual Art CBA2 Skills Digital CBA1	29 th – 3 rd Dec Gaeilge CBA2	6 th – 7 th Jan Home Ec. CBA2	31 st – 4 th Feb	28 th – 4 th March Science CBA2 Music CBA2	28 th – 1 st April PRACTICALS?	2 nd – 6 th May
6 th – 10 th Sept Visual Art CBA2	4 th – 8 th Oct Visual Art CBA2 Graphics CBA2 Engineer CBA2	8 th – 12 th Nov Visual Art CBA2 MFL CBA1	6 th – 10 th Dec Gaeilge CBA2 Home Ec. CBA2	10 th – 14 th Jan Home Ec. CBA2 Maths CBA2	7 th – 11 th Feb MOCKS	7 th – 11 th March Science CBA2 Music CBA2	4 th – 8 th April PRACTICALS?	9 th – 13 th May
13 th -17 th Sept Visual Art CBA2 English CBA1 Wood Tec CBA2	11 th – 15 th Oct Visual Art CBA2 Skills Digital CBA1	15 th – 19 th Nov Visual Art CBA2 MFL CBA1	13 th – 17 th Dec Gaeilge CBA2 Home Ec. CBA2	17 th – 21 st Jan Maths CBA2	14 th - 18 th Feb MOCKS	14 th –18 th March Science CBA2 Music CBA2	11 th – 22 nd April Easter Holidays	16 th – 20 th May
20 th - 24 th Sept Visual Art CBA2 English CBA1 Wood Tec CBA2 Graphics CBA2 Engineer CBA2	18 th – 22 nd Oct Visual Art CBA2 Skills Digital CBA1	22 nd – 26 th Nov MFL CBA1	20 th – 22 nd Dec 23 rd – 5 th Jan Christmas Holidays	24 th – 28 th Jan Maths CBA2	21 nd – 25 th Feb February Midterm	21 st –25 th March Science CBA2 Music CBA2	25 th – 29 th April	23 rd – 27 th May
	25 th – 29 th Oct Halloween							

Thank you from:

Mr. Tom Rowan

Principal

Ms. Georgina White

Deputy Principal

Mr. John Sweeney

Deputy Principal

Ms. Amanda Timony

JCT Coordinator