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### ***Dear Sixth Class Students and parents***

*This document will give you an insight to the variety of subjects offered at Coláiste Cholmcille and the skills and knowledge developed through the study of those subjects. This forms our Junior Cycle Curriculum offer and it offers every student various opportunities to display their diverse skill sets.*

*D McGuinness – Deputy Principal*

#### **Gaeilge**

The first year Junior Cycle curriculum for Gaeilge builds upon the skills and knowledge of students acquired at primary school level. Our curriculum is rooted in the rich and shared tradition of Irish language, literature, history, and culture, and incorporates a comprehensive range of spoken and written elements connected to our native tongue. In undertaking the study of Irish, students will be part of an energetic, fun, and dynamic learning environment in which they will see the practical benefits of the use of the Irish language in everyday settings.

#### **English**

When your child enters their first English class in secondary school, they will be greeted with passionate teachers, thought-provoking texts and forward-thinking technology. Junior Cycle English provides opportunities for students of all interests and abilities to think critically, explore curiously and reflect deeply. Between studying film to analysing the power of a photograph, the English classroom focuses on much more than the written word. The CCBS English Department regularly update their textbooks to reflect the ever-changing nature of the subject. We can guarantee your child will feel comfortable and safe whilst being challenged academically in the English classroom.

#### **Mathematics**

1<sup>st</sup> year Maths covers a wide variety of topics, including probability, sets, algebra, statistics and geometry, to name but a few. Our course builds on students' prior knowledge and focuses on developing their mathematical understanding, reasoning and problem-solving skills. This will be done through collaboration with their peers and efforts to show how applications of maths can be of use outside the classroom.

## **Modern foreign languages – French and German**

1<sup>st</sup> year students study both French and German as part of a taster course lasting 4 weeks, after which they select one of the two languages to continue with for the rest of 1<sup>st</sup> year and the Junior Cycle. Using interactive teaching methodologies, students develop strong foundations in the language, with a particular focus on the oral aspect and an awareness of the culture in the countries that speak the language. A key focus in 1<sup>st</sup> year is on being able to talk about themselves – describing their appearance, where they live, family, etc.

## **Science**

In 1<sup>st</sup> year, students will learn about topics from three of the subject strands of Junior Cycle Science, namely the Biological, Physical and Chemical World. Some of the topics that students will engage with include the inner workings of the lungs and heart, as well as learning all about speed and density, and studying the topic of atoms and the Periodic Table.

## **Geography**

Geography is studied by all students at Junior Cycle and involves learning about the physical world around us as well as the way in which humans interact with it. Topics covered in first year include; plate tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes, rivers, population studies and map skills. During lessons our students are given the opportunity to complete projects and presentations on major geographical moments and current events.

## **History**

*“Those who study history, plan for their future by understanding their past.”*

The study of History relates to the examination of change over time and covers all aspects of human society. Drawing upon skills acquired at Primary School level, students of Junior Cycle History in Coláiste Cholmcille will further develop their understanding of people, events, and changes that have occurred in the past. They will undertake work in a positive, creative, and dynamic learning environment in which they will utilize a wide range of written, digital, oral, and aural resources on topics as diverse as Ancient Rome to The German Reformation. As a core subject, students study History for the three-year duration of their Junior Cycle.

## **Visual Art**

Visual Art is a course that is covered over a period of 200 hours throughout the 3 years of Junior Cycle. The subject is comprised of three strands - Art, Craft and Design. There is a large focus on observational drawing in 1<sup>st</sup> year and, through engaging with this, students will develop their analytical skills. Introduction to painting and 3D art work also form part of the 1<sup>st</sup> year curriculum.

## **Home Economics (H.E.)**

In first year HE, you can expect an introduction to food and culinary skills. In this module you learn about basic nutrition and how it can be applied to daily lives. You learn about nutrition in other countries too. You then put the theory in to practice in cookery classes. Here you learn a range of skills that prepare you for life after school and you also become conscious of health and safety in the Kitchen. Sustainability underpins our food and culinary skills module. We also do a basic introduction to textiles in first year. In the past we have made small cushions, Christmas stockings and some small framed cross stitch.

## **Music**

Through engaging with the subject of music, first year students are offered opportunities to develop new skills, while drawing on their previous experiences. They will learn about various genres of music and instruments. In particular, much focus is placed on listening, performing and composing activities.

## **Business Studies**

First Year Business students will learn all about the fast-changing world of business. They will research different businesses and the skills needed to become a successful business person. As well as this we focus on the main types of income and expenditure for people and create budgets. Students also learn about the rights and responsibilities we all have as consumers. They work in groups to create product ideas and present their plans for how to promote, set prices and distribute these products.

## **Engineering**

The focus of junior cycle Engineering is goal-oriented problem solving for the manufacture of products, with emphasis on efficiency, accuracy, precision and a high- quality finish.

This project-based approach to junior cycle Engineering requires students to develop a knowledge of materials and processes, and to demonstrate a capacity to select appropriate materials and processes for given applications. Engineering offers students a lens through which to view the role and impact of engineering within their classroom, community and the world. Through the study of engineering, students will have the opportunity to behave as engineers, and develop an engineering mindset. They identify problems, integrate ideas for how to solve identified problems, and try to improve the design or devise a better one.

## **Graphics**

Graphics is recognised as the underpinning language of the technology disciplines and is transferable across a wide range of subjects such as mathematics, science and art. Students will use a variety of media to communicate their ideas and designs through this unique language. Throughout the course, students will explore the geometric world to gain an appreciation of the importance of graphics in the world around them. They will develop cognitive and practical skills such as graphical communication, spatial visualisation, creative problem-solving, design capabilities and modelling, both physically and using computer-aided design.

## **Wood Technology**

1<sup>st</sup> Year Wood Technology aims to develop the students' conceptual, design and investigative skills to solve real life problems, while also developing a range of hand skills through processing Wood and other materials.

## **Computers**

1<sup>st</sup> year students will develop the skills and knowledge needed by students to effectively use word processing (MSWord) for a variety of uses. Also, they will have the opportunity to use spreadsheets for a range of applications and recognise the benefits in creating and applying formulas. 1<sup>st</sup> year students are also taught the importance of understanding the concepts and associated risks of the internet and the World Wide Web, as well as having to demonstrate an ability to edit, enhance and present a variety of information graphically (DTP). Also, they will get to explore different coding languages to develop and build their own websites and games.

## **Religion**

Junior Cycle Religious Education focuses on developing knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values to enable young people to come to an understanding of religion and its relevance to life, relationships, society and the wider world. The course is built around three interconnecting strands: Exploring Beliefs, Exploring Questions and Living our Values. While Religion is not an exam subject here in Coláiste Cholmcille, students will complete various assessments throughout their three years at Junior Cycle; such as project work, group/peer work and class presentations.

## **Physical Education (PE)**

Physical Education at Coláiste Cholmcille aims to develop students as knowledgeable, skillful and creative participants who are confident and competent to perform in a range of physical activities safely. Our PE programme aims to build students appreciation of the importance of health enhancing and inclusive physical activity and a commitment to it now, and in the future. Teaching and learning is based around four strands; 1. Physical Activity for Health and Wellbeing 2. Games 3. Individual and Team Challenges 4. Dance & Gymnastics.

## **Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)**

CSPE is student-centred and plays a key part in the new area of learning entitled Wellbeing . In CSPE, there are 3 strands of learning. In First Year, students will explore Strand 1: Rights and responsibilities.

In this strand, students will learn what it means to live with rights and responsibilities and examine the main human rights instruments that protect people's rights. Students feel confident, happy, educated and connected through fun active learning methodologies such as group work, debating and role play.

## **Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE)**

SPHE provides students with a unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about the health, personal lives and social development. Key aims of 1<sup>st</sup> year SPHE is to promote self-esteem and self-confidence and to promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.