

New Junior Cycle

Information for Parents/Guardians

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Please read this leaflet in conjunction with viewing your child's report on VShare. The new Junior Cycle has replaced the old grading system of A, B, C, etc, with descriptors e.g. Distinction, Higher Merit, Merit, etc. We are implementing state exam descriptors in all Junior Cycle reports. We hope the information below will give you a complete understanding of the New Junior Cycle structure.

The new Junior Cycle will place the student at the centre of the learning process. It allows for new ways of learning and a broader range of skills to be properly assessed. The eight key skills will ensure that your child receives a rich educational experience that has both breadth and depth.

The Eight Key Skills are:

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



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:

- A better and a more engaging learning experience for your child
- Updated subject specifications
- Quality reporting back to parents and students
- Assessment to support learning
- An emphasis on Key Skills and preparation for life
- A sound preparation for learning at Senior Cycle and beyond

Well Being:

Your child's wellbeing is of central importance to their educational success and overall happiness. Wellbeing has become a core part of your child's Junior Cycle experience. This area of learning includes, amongst others, P.E., C.S.P.E., S.P.H.E. and Guidance.

<p>These are the State Examination descriptors that will replace the old grades. These will be rolled out to replace the A,B,C etc. grades as the new courses come into effect.</p>	Grade Descriptors		Classroom Based Assessment
	Distinction	90-100%	Exceptional
		75-89%	Above expectations
	Higher Merit	55-74%	In line with expectations
	Merit	40-54%	Yet to meet expectations
	Achieved	20-39%	
Partially Achieved	0-19%		
Not Graded			

Subject Roll Out:

The new English, Science and Business courses have been fully rolled out and will be reported with the new descriptors on your child's Junior Certificate and Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.

Second years are currently studying the new English, Science, Business, Irish, French and Art courses.

First year students have all of the above along with Maths, Home Economics, History, Music and Geography. First and Second year students will have the new descriptors in place for our reporting system (VShare).

Assessment:

The most significant change in the new Junior Cycle is in the area of assessment. A dual approach will be taken to assessment, involving classroom based assessments (CBA's) in Second and Third year, an Assessment Task worth 10% immediately after CBA2 and a final externally assessed, state certified examination (Junior Certificate) worth 90% in June of Third year.

Classroom based assessments are tasks that are clearly described, as are the criteria for assessment to support teacher judgement. The criteria are found in the *Features of Quality* linked to each Classroom Based Assessment and will be given to students in advance of the CBA.

Current Third year students will receive CBA results for English, Business and Science from their teachers **and will be communicated in their Pre Results Report in March.**

Junior Certificate Schools Programme