

Christ King Secondary School, Half Moon Lane,

South Douglas Road, Cork.

Roll No: 62692 I



Access to the Curriculum and Subject Choice within Christ King Secondary School

Table of Contents

Section	Title	Page
Section 1	Rationale for this Policy	3
Section 2	General Philosophy for Curriculum Provision	3
Section 3	Curricular Planning and Coordination	3
Section 4	Curricular Provision	4
Section 5	The Junior Cycle Programme	5
Section 6	The Transition Year Programme	6
Section 7	The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme	9
Section 8	The Leaving Certificate	11
Section 9	Repeat Leaving Certificate	12
Section 10	General Provisions	13
Section 11	Monitoring and Review	15

Section 1 Rationale for this Policy

Our school is committed to the full and holistic development of each of our students. It is our belief that each student will perform to the best of their ability if they are engaged with subjects that they are interested in, and choose for themselves having received all the relevant information and guidance.

Section 2 General Philosophy for Curriculum Provision

Christ King Secondary School seeks to provide as full a range of curriculum through subject choice as is possible within our resources.

At present the school offers 15 subjects at Junior and at Senior Cycle offers 19 subjects in the traditional programme as well as Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and Transition Year. Within each programme specific student subject choice options occur. Students are afforded the opportunity to select from an “open sky” of subjects. These subjects are presented as individual subjects without any subject blocks pre arrangement for students. This process serves to allow the student identify the subject choices she wishes to make without constraint and also allows the school maximize the percentage of success in allotting students into their preferred subject options

Section 3 Curricular Planning and Coordination

Teachers of each subject area form themselves into departments. Each subject department appoints a Head of Department each September who works in a voluntary capacity to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- To act as a contact person for that subject department
- To bring matters regarding subject provision, subject resources and assessment procedures to the link member of senior management.

Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

- To convene meetings of subject departments
- To record minutes of subject department meetings on the shared drive.

Departments meet formally three times per year in accordance with a schedule set out in the school calendar under Croke Park hours. The purpose of these meetings is several-fold:

- To eliminate the possibility of professional isolation that may be felt by individual subject teachers
- To foster professional dialogue, debate and reflection.
- To plan for the changing and increasing demands on school and students.
- To discuss resource requirements for the subject department
- To discuss timetabling matters
- To decide on booklists for the coming academic year following a review of current textbooks.
- To evaluate the quality of and approach to teaching and learning
- To empower subject teachers as educators and decision-makers
- To develop a sense of cooperation and collaboration
- To assist in the delivery of school policies at classroom level.

The Principal and Deputy Principals maintain close contact with all departments and co-ordinators and strive to support teachers in every possible way within the school's available resources in the discharge of their professional duties.

All subject departments have a detailed written plan that is updated annually and kept under ongoing review and development. All subject plans are available on the shared drive of Subject Departments.

Section 4 Curricular Provision

The school provides the following programmes of education for its students:

1. The Junior Cycle/Certificate Programme (3 years)
2. The Transition Year Programme: an optional programme for students (1 year)
3. The Leaving Certificate Programme (2 years)

Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

4. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme – optional as part of the Leaving Certificate programme.

Section 5 The Junior Cycle Programme

The academic year 2014/2015 marked the commencement of the gradual introduction of the new Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA), a process that will not be completed until 2022. The new JCSA will see changes in every syllabus to incorporate certain key skills and statements of learning. Methods of assessment and certification will also change gradually. Comprehensive information about these changes can be obtained on www.ncca.ie and www.juniorcycle.ie

1st year from September 2021

The following core subjects are taken by all students to D.E.S. examination level:

*Irish	English	Mathematics
Religious Education	History	Geography
French/German		

In addition, students also select any 3 of the following optional subjects to D.E.S. examination level:

Business Studies	Science	Music
Art	Home Economics	Graphics

All 1st year students will also study Wellbeing - incorporating Choir, Sustainability, Digital Literacy, Life Skills, Physical Education, Civic, Social, Political Education (CSPE) and Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE), including Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).

* except those with a DES exemption. Students with official exemptions from the study of Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

Irish (according to the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools: Circular M/10/94) who have educational assessments are accommodated within the available teacher allocation against Irish. Students availing of their exemption will be offered additional support in literacy. New-comer students, with department allocations of English as an Additional Language, are provided with tuition in the English language. This is structured to occur during Irish periods in the student timetable.

Information on subject choice is presented to parents at the Parental Information Meeting during the entrance assessment in January. Parents are invited to attend Subject Choice Information Afternoon with their daughter where further information and guidance is given by the Guidance Counsellors. Subjects are then chosen within 3 weeks by logging into the in-school administrative system VShare.

Subject blocks in 1st year are created on the basis of student choices using the VShare Options package in order to provide the maximum number of students with their first three preferences. The allocation of subjects is issued to students, with their timetable, when they come into school in September. Students are allowed to change options up to the end of October subject to availability.

Section 6 The Transition Year Programme

This is a specially devised programme of study for students who have completed their Junior Cycle education. This one-year educational programme offers the potential for the holistic development of young people as flexible learners, active citizens and future workers. In our school Transition Year Programme is an optional programme.

It is an interdisciplinary programme with an emphasis on personal development, social awareness and increased social competence. Students taking this option are given the chance to follow a school-developed course of study without the pressure of State examinations.

Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

An entry process has been developed to ascertain the capacity of the students to engage with the course as demonstrated during the Junior Cycle and in particular during the previous school year. This process will include consideration of the student's involvement and commitment to school spirit and the teaching and learning atmosphere within their class grouping. Consideration is given to the input of teachers, Year Tutor and Deputy Principal who are involved with the student.

Admission Calendar for students entering TY in September 2021:

Monday, 22nd February 2021	Student presentation:
Monday, 22nd February 2021	Application forms will be distributed to all 3rd years
Tuesday, 23rd February 2021	Parental presentation
Wednesday, 24th February 2021	Parental presentation shall be emailed to any parent not in a position to attend.
Thursday 25th March 2021	Closing date for completed application forms. Any application forms received after this date are considered Late Applications
Week of Monday, 29th March 2021	Student interviews, with TY Programme Coordinator, Third Year Tutor and Deputy Principal
Friday, 2nd April 2021	Students notified of application process outcome

The programme includes the following from September 2021:

Core Subjects

Core Subjects	Class Periods Per Week

Modular subjects (2 periods per week per group – total 6 periods per week)

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3

A particularly significant feature of the year is that all students are exposed to subjects which they may not have studied at Junior Cycle level. It is intended the increased exposure will result in possible selection of different optional subjects at Leaving Certificate level.

Students are encouraged to participate in all of the following:

Careers Programme, Work Experience Programme – two weeks placement, Social Awareness Programme– including GAISCE, Fundraising, Mentoring, Faith Friends and a Cultural Awareness Programme - French exchange, a tour to European City.

Work experience is a central part of the programme as are the many extra-curricular

Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

activities and outings in which the students participate. Full details may be obtained by contacting the Programme Co-ordinator, Ms. M. O' Leary, or by viewing the comprehensive programme on the school website www.christkingschool.com

Offer of places:

Offers of places are made in writing to students after the application process is completed. Students failing to gain a place in Transition Year will be notified by letter. Any decision not to admit a student to Transition Year may be appealed to the Board of Management. Details of this process will be included on the letter from the school management.

Appeal Process:

Further to the allocation of places, a student may wish to appeal their refusal to be accommodated in TY. A letter stating the intention to appeal and the reasons for the appeal should be submitted to the secretary of the BoM of the school (i.e. the Principal) within two weeks of the notification of refusal. Following receipt of this letter, the BoM of the school will appoint a subcommittee to oversee the appeal and to meet with the student and family if this is suitable and required. They will submit a report to the Board who will review the situation at a scheduled meeting. Their decision will be communicated in due course.

Section 7 The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

An option available to students at this level is to undertake the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) as a full school subject. Spread over two years, the LCVP combines the academic strengths of the established Leaving Certificate with a new and dynamic focus on enterprise, the world of work, information technology and languages.

It promotes the skills and qualities of self-reliance, innovation and enterprise in an integrated programme that will prove relevant to the lives of students on leaving school for further education, for employment and for self employment.

Why do a Leaving Certificate with a Vocational emphasis?

The L.C.V. P. programme seeks to create links between study and the world of work. This linking is done through the added modules which are designed to focus attention on enterprise and preparation for work.

The word 'Vocational' is intended to emphasise the goal of the course which is to strengthen the sense of 'direction' in life that a student will gain through the course. By engaging in the Link Modules, it is intended that a student will gain a better sense of the world of work, a clearer sense of direction in what she may wish to do.

Furthermore, the course seeks to encourage the development of skills: interview techniques, technology skills, etc. and the personal qualities such as self-directed learning that will empower students to realise their potential either in college or in the world of work. All of this is done through the Link Modules: Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education

Application Process:

An information night is provided for parents on Senior Cycle Options after which application forms are made available. Applications are accepted up to the deadline date identified on the application form.

Application received after that date may not be considered if sufficient places are not available. There is a maximum of places in the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme in accordance with guidelines of the DES and agreement with unions.

Entry into L.C.V.P. is on the basis of application and based on a set of criteria which reflect the nature of the year.

Section 8 The Leaving Certificate

Traditional Leaving Certificate is a two year programme. Students select seven subjects and must include the core subjects of Irish, English and Maths. Students with an exemption from the study of Irish must take an alternative provision at that time. Students may study Geography and take the exam for Leaving Certificate in order to provide seven subjects for the examination. Some students who are exempt Irish and have Education Assessments will have the option of additional support classes at this time. An information night is provided for parents after which subject choices are made. Students are given sufficient time to discern subject choices.

Placement in classes:

Assignment of students to classes is a matter for school management. The subjects chosen by a student and the level at which she wishes to access the subject is accommodated in as far as possible, cognisant of the criteria outlined above, relevant to particular courses.

In the case of 5th years, students are placed in classes on the basis of Junior Certificate results primarily. Cognisance is taken next to the results from Transition Year as a secondary filter (in particular in English, Irish and Maths and modern foreign language) in placing students in streamed classes. In the event of a student missing an assessment, reference is made to existing results and a substituted averaged result based on the Junior Cert grade in the subject.

Further to this division, if it is required, students are placed using the following processes as appropriate, alphabetical placing, random placing, further testing in the first term of the new cycle. Final arrangements of classes are done when students return to school as consultation on higher and ordinary levels may lead to necessitating a revised division of classes. Final class arrangements may also await the Junior cycle results.

All students take the following subjects to examination level:

*Irish	English	Mathematics	*French/German
--------	---------	-------------	----------------

*Students with a D.E.S. exemption; students are offered Geography to examination level Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

during Irish class time. Students are offered additional support opposite modern foreign language class time based on their specific educational needs.

They then select three of the following, also to examination level:

History	Geography	Music	Art
Business	Accountancy	Biology	Chemistry
Home Economics	Design, Communication & Graphics	Computer Science	Economics
Physics	Religious Education		

Students are also offered Applied Maths and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

In 5th and 6th years, students also have timetabled classes in the following non-examination subjects: Religious Education, Physical Education, Social Personal Health Education (S.P.H.E) incorporating RSE in 5th year and Career Guidance.

Section 9 Repeat Leaving Certificate

The school will consider requests to repeat the Leaving Certificate from previously enrolled students. Priority will be given to students of the school and only thereafter to students from other schools.

As distinct from students enrolled in Christ King Secondary School, repeat applicants from other schools are considered under Section 5 of the policy above, as requests for Transfer.

Requirements of students

Policy of Curricular Provision May 2021, to be reviewed annually in line with D.E.S. Teacher Allocation

Christ King Secondary School does not have the facility to guarantee a separate Leaving Certificate Repeat class in any academic year due to pressure of numbers. Should students be accepted for repeating, we expect a high standard in regard to study and behaviour, for the sake of their own success and as an example to the other students who do have their experience to draw upon. In particular we would like to reiterate the terms of admission to our school:

1. All students are bound by the Code of Behaviour.
2. All students are expected to adhere to all school policies.

Section 10 General Provisions

1. It is school policy not to stream classes in first year. After first year, classes in Maths will be divided in accordance with the levels taken by students i.e. higher or ordinary. Classes in all other subjects will be of mixed ability. The greatest possible level of choice is given to students when selecting optional subjects for first and fifth years in that subject groupings are not pre-determined by the school but emerge following an “open skies” process aimed at satisfying the greatest number of students. Students may avail of Supervised Study for 2 hours after school each day from Monday to Thursday.
2. The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCAP) is not currently available in the school. This position will be reviewed by the school in consultation with the various stakeholders in the course of the 2021/2022 academic year.
3. School management and the teaching staff also keep under review the desirability and possibility of introducing new subjects to the school’s curriculum, subject to the provision and funding by the DES of all necessary resources.
4. It is the responsibility of the teacher to recommend from their professional judgment the appropriate level for the student in the state exams. It is the practice in the school that this recommendation is communicated to parents either verbally

at parent-teacher meetings or by letter. The final decision is a matter for the parent/guardian or student.

5. Assignment of students to classes is a matter for school management. The subjects chosen by a student and the level at which she wishes to access the subject is accommodated in as far as possible, cognisant of the criteria outlined above, relevant to particular courses.
6. The school reserves the right to re-assign students to classes based on recommendations of educational/counseling/medical assessments or from the discipline/pastoral care committees. Such recommendations and changes occur only in exceptional circumstances.
7. Changes of subjects will only be considered in order to facilitate a student in relation to faculty or course requirements for a stated course at 3rd level. The change is possible only within one concurrent Timetable Block of subjects. The parents/guardians of the student must make their request in writing to the principal. In this request the parents/guardians must provide the following information:
 - a. The relevant teacher and school management must be assured that the student has the academic "wherewithal" to achieve in the subject area within the limited time frame. This may be achieved through the provision of evidence of displayed competency-(eg. Having taken the subject to an appropriate level at Junior Certificate level)
 - b. The parents/guardians and the student herself undertake that they recognise the challenge of completing 2 year syllabus in a reduced time frame.
 - c. A student must undertake formal career guidance prior to any decision in relation to a change of subject. A change of subject recommendation from a member of the Career Guidance Department is a relevant consideration in the process. Identified course or faculty requirements at Third Level may be

a factor relevant to such a decision.

Section 11 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors and Class Teachers and will be reviewed in consultation with the Student Council and Parents Council of Christ King Secondary School.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on : 11/5/2021

Signed: Margaret McErmach Date: 12/5/2021
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Richard Long Date: 12th May 2021.
Principal