

# **Junior Certificate Schools Programme Policy**

January (2015)



**of**

Coláiste Mhuire Co – Ed

# Junior Certificate Schools Programme

## Scope

This policy applies to the pupils attending Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. It is prepared using JCSP guidelines.

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to outline our approach to monitoring, encouraging and promoting the JCSP programme in our school.

## Relationship of this Policy to the Mission and Aims of the School

Our mission statement is: 'Coláiste Mhuire aspires to provide an inclusive education for all its students in a caring and supportive environment. The school aims to maximise the potential of all students'. Reaching one's full potential is facilitated through active engagement in the curriculum which is facilitated by the JCSP programme.

## Related School Policies

This JCSP Policy and Plan is consistent with and supported by a range of other School Policies:

Code of Behaviour

Anti-Bullying Policy

Attendance Policy

Special Education Needs Policy

Leaving Cert Applied and Transition Year Policy

## What is JCSP?

The Junior Certificate Programme is a national programme sponsored by the Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. The JCSP is a way of working within the Junior Certificate. It is designed especially to help young people who have had a difficult experience of school and may be potential early leavers. Through a system of profiling students work in Junior Cycle classes, students are provided with opportunities to engage with the curriculum and to achieve success at school. They get an official certificate of their achievements, validated by the Department of Education and Science, in addition to their Junior Certificate Examination Certificate.

## JCSP Programme Aims

The Junior Certificate Schools Programme aims to provide a curriculum framework that assists schools and teachers in making the Junior Certificate more accessible to those young people who may leave school without formal qualifications. It attempts to help young people experience success and develop a positive selfimage by providing a curriculum and

assessment frame work suitable to their needs. On completion of the programme students receive a profile which is an official record of their achievements from the Department of Education and Science.

The Junior Certificate School Programme is not an alternative to the Junior Certificate. It is a framework that is designed to help schools and teachers develop an imaginative approach to the Junior Certificate course. All the students in the Programme must be entered for the Junior Certificate examination.

### **Selection Criteria for JCSP**

#### **Selection of students for JCSP (What selection criteria are used?)**

In Colaiste Mhuire Co-Ed the JCSP programme is provided to all students at junior cycle. This allows us to cater for students who fulfil the following specific criteria.

Low academic performance and repeated experiences of failure in learning in primary school
Disruptive behaviour in the primary school
Poor results in the CAT tests, which are administered on-entry to post primary schooling
Lack of confidence and low self-esteem
Difficulties with social interaction, not only with teachers but also with peers
Serious difficulties with basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, which interfere with their ability to cope with the normal demands of school and everyday life
A record of high absenteeism from school
Students at risk of early school leaving.

The Core team will review the selection process regularly. Those students involved in JCSP will be monitored and discussed to ensure maximum success within the programme. Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed believes that the aims and methodologies espoused by JCSP are of benefit to all students. In a Mixed Ability environment it would be detrimental to students

who will ultimately benefit more from the programme to be segregated. With this in mind all Junior Cycle students follow the JCSP curriculum in tandem with the Junior Cert.

**Personnel involved in the Selection Process:**

The following is a list of Colaiste Mhuire staff involved in the selection process of JCSP candidates:

English Department Representative
Maths Department Representative
Behavior for learning Representative
School Completion Programme Representative
JCSP and Special Educational Needs Representatives
Home School Liaison
Co-ordinator of Programmes
Deputy principal
Teacher/s

**The JCSP Student**

Students get an opportunity to become more involved in their own learning, discussing statements and meeting targets. Through engagement with this learning process, students begin to succeed and go on to build on this success. Throughout their time on the Programme the JCSP team seeks out opportunities to reward and praise students and to give them useful feedback on their performance. In addition, the JCSP team tries to make positive contact with the students' families. When the students sit their Junior Certificate exam they also get a certificate from the Department of Education and Science and a profile listing all they have achieved while on the Programme.

**Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed in JCSP in Colaiste Mhuire . The school tries to frequently contact parents with emphasis on passing on "good news". Events like

the Open Evening, Christmas Celebration, Make a book Exhibition, frequent awarding of certificates and the awarding of statements to mention just some areas of parental contact.

Parents are invited to become actively involved in their children's education by working with the school in encouraging good attendance, punctuality and homework and by praising progress made.

### **JCSP Rationale**

The Junior Certificate Schools Programme is based on the concept that all young people are capable of real success in school and that they can have a positive experience of school if the conditions are favourable. The programme is a national Department of Education and Science Programme within the Junior Certificate aimed at students who may leave school early. Every year a small group of students leave school, some of them without attempting any of the state examinations. For many of these young people, their experience of school has been one of failure and alienation. The JSCP has been designed to ensure that these young people can benefit from their time in school and enjoy the experience of improvement and success.

Students cannot fail JCSP. The Programme is about success. Achievable statements are carefully chosen. Students get an opportunity to complete a series of statements and build their own success profile – a profile listing all the things they can do

### **Programme Development**

JCSP began in the school in September 2007. The programme began with 15 students who received their official certification from the Department in May 2010. Since September 2008 the programme was extended to include all the incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year students. Since September 2009 all 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 15 3<sup>rd</sup> year students are involved in the programme. At present all 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students are taking part in the programme. The subjects included in the programme at the beginning were English, Irish, Maths. Science, Art and French were subsequently introduced. Since September 2014 all first year subjects are included in the Junior Certificate School Programme.

Students complete statements which contain specific learning targets related to each subject. Students also complete a number of cross – curricular statements such as the Paired Reading and Make a Book statements. Students also take part in various initiatives that are run by JCSP teachers during the school year.

### **Profiling**

This is the gathering of information in relation to JCSP students. General progress of students will be monitored as well as the actual statements being completed. It has been agreed that the profiling this year will take place two to three times per year. Profiling meetings will be facilitated by the Co-ordinators. This is time dependant. The core team have agreed to provide cover for teachers attending our profiling meetings during the year. This will allow for minimum disturbance to classes and staff.

### **The Core Team**

The school management has established a core group of teachers timetabled to meet weekly. (Please see Appendix 1)

### **Recording student progress**

Each teacher records the progress of their own students and may give them feedback on their performance. Some teachers work collaboratively with students to record progress made. This information will be passed to the co-ordinators (usually during profile meeting time)

### **Record keeping**

Teachers keep their own records of students' progress through targets and statements. At the same time each student records their progress in each statement in their JCSP

folder. The co-ordinator has the official master record of progress. This is updated at profile meetings usually held once per term (twice to three times a year). Teachers keep their own records. The master records are kept by the co-ordinator(s).

Student profiling is the responsibility of the co co-ordinators. Such information will be stored in the JCSP filing cabinet and are kept until the student completes the JCSP Programme. It is our hope that profiling takes place twice or three times a year for each student.

It is important to note that subject Statements are the responsibility of individual subject teachers.

### **Cross Curricular Work**

We will incorporate Cross-curricular work where possible with our JCSP students. This is a linking of subjects. It is an approach to methodology which fosters learning by first-hand experience and the active participation of students in planning, decision-making and in evaluation. The aim of cross-curricular work is to provide students with an active, enquiring education which is grounded in the issues of everyday life so that they may become flexible and adaptable members of society. There are a whole series of cross-curricular statements that teachers can choose from. To date we have been very involved in the Make a Book initiative. This particular initiative covers a number of cross curricular initiatives.

This year we hope to continue with the above initiative. We also hope to address cross-curricular statements related to “Drop Everything and Read”, Paired reading, study skills and some SPHE and CSPE statements.

### **School support**

In order to aid staff members involved in JCSP the following steps are taken:

- Support in all areas of JCSP from Co-ordinator's.

- Time for meeting (core team, profiling etc)
- A handbook of statements.
- School visits from the support service
- Resources from the support service
- Staff are informed of and encouraged to attend in-service on topics such as: methodologies, subject areas, literacy, numeracy etc.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed in JCSP. Schools increase the frequency of contact with parents with emphasis on passing on ‘good news’. Many schools hold parent days to exhibit work done, award certificates of achievement and generally celebrate with parents their children’s successes. Parents are invited to become actively involved in their children’s education by working with the school in encouraging good attendance, punctuality and homework and by praising progress made.

Parents of new students will be informed of JCSP by school management on open night. The HSCI co-ordinator will provide parents with on-going information / updates in relation to JCSP.

### **Review**

This policy is due for review in September 2017.

**Appendix 1** (please note this appendix is subject to annual update without ratification of the policy)

The following is a list of the staff members involved in the JCSP core team for the school year 2014/15.

1.	Paddy Stapleton	English
2.	Annemarie Purtill	Behavior for learning
3.	Roisin Slattery	School Completion Programme
4.	Julie Delaney	JCSP and Special Educational Needs
5.	Helen Wallace	JCSP and Special Educational Needs
6.	Olivia Ryan	Home School Liaison
7.	Ann Conroy	Co-ordinator of Programmes/Maths Department Representative
8.	Clare Wallace	Deputy principal
9.	Caoimhe Geaney	Teacher

**Appendix 2** (please note this appendix is subject to annual update without ratification of the policy)

**Current JCSP Teachers and Subjects**

<u>Irish</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Maths</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>French</u>	<u>Art</u>	<u>Learning Support</u>
J Cahill	P Hickey	A Conroy	A Conroy	D Fahy	R Dorney	J Delaney
C Geaney	J A Butler	J Brennan	D Ryan	P Walsh	PJ O'Connell	H Wallace
S O Cradog	C Browne P Stapleton	J Cahill M Smith	M Smith D Wall			C Browne D Wall

<u>Woodwork</u>	<u>Metal Work</u>	<u>Home Economics</u>	<u>Business Studies</u>	<u>History</u>	<u>Geography</u>	<u>SPHE</u>
J Dunne	T Byrne	K Stakelum M Smith	M Bergin A M Purtill S Walsh	D Fahy S OCradog	D Fahy S OCradog	J A Butler J Delaney P Stapleton P Hickey

<u>CSPE</u>	<u>Study Skills</u>	<u>Tech Graphics</u>	<u>IT</u>
S O Cradog E Molumby J Cahill R Dorney	C Wallace LO Donnell	J Fanning	M Bergin C Wallace