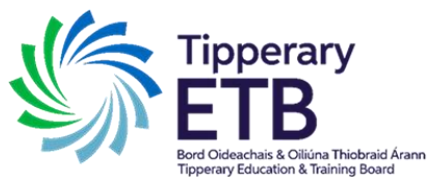




Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME POLICY

April 2025



Policy Area	Schools
Document Reference number	CMCE/JCSP/073/3
Version	1
Document Drafted by	Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed, Thurles
Date previous version: adopted by SLT noted by TETB Committee	14 February 2023 28 February 2023
Reviewed / Amended by School	January 2023
Reviewed and Ratified by BOM	3 April 2025
Date Noted / to be Noted by TETB	20 May 2025
Policy Renewal Date	April 2025
Date of Withdrawal of Obsolete Document	3 April 2025 Document Ref. No. CMCE/JCSP/073/2 Version No. 1

Junior Certificate Schools Programme

SCOPE

This policy applies to the pupils attending Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. It is prepared using Junior Cycle School Programme (J.C.S.P.) guidelines.

RATIONALE

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

RELATIONSHIP OF THIS POLICY TO THE MISSION AND AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

Our mission statement is: **At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed we aspire to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that encourages the potential of each person. The mission is realised through our core values of Respect, Care, Community, Equality and Excellence in Education.** Reaching one's full potential is facilitated through active engagement in the curriculum which is facilitated by the J.C.S.P. programme.

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

This J.C.S.P. 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

HSCL

Wellbeing Policy

Educational Tours and out of school Activities Policy

Student Support Team Policy

What is J.C.S.P.?

The Junior Certificate School Programme is a national programme funded by the Department of Education and supported by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (N.C.C.A). The J.C.S.P. works in tandem with the Junior Cycle. 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. Students get an official certificate of their achievements, validated by the Department of Education, in addition to their Junior Cycle Certification.

J.C.S.P PROGRAMME AIMS

The Junior Certificate School Programme attempts to help young people experience success and develop a positive self-image by providing a curriculum and assessment framework 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.

The J.C.S.P. is not an alternative to the Junior Cycle. It is a framework that is designed to help schools and teachers develop an imaginative approach to the Junior Cycle framework. All the students in the Programme must be entered for the Junior Cycle examination.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR J.C.S.P.

Selection of students for J.C.S.P.

In Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed the J.C.S.P 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 not achieving in learning in primary school
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Poor results in the assessment tests, which are administered on-entry to post primary schooling
Lack of confidence and low self-esteem based on feedback from the primary school, teacher observation and linking with our AEN department.
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:

Those students involved in J.C.S.P. will be monitored by the J.C.S.P. team and subject teachers. They will seek to ensure that the students achieve maximum success within the programme. Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed believes that the aims and methodologies espoused by J.C.S.P. are of benefit to all students. With this in mind all Junior Cycle students follow the J.C.S.P. curriculum in tandem with the Junior Cert.

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 J.C.S.P. team seeks out opportunities to reward and praise students and to give them useful feedback on their performance. In addition, the J.C.S.P. team tries to make positive contact with the students' families. When the students sit their Junior Cycle they also get a certificate from the Department of Education and a profile listing all they have achieved while on the programme.

J.C.S.P. RATIONALE

The Junior Certificate School 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 Programme within the Junior Cycle aimed at students who may leave school early. Every year, in Ireland, 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 J.C.S.P. 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 J.C.S.P. 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

J.C.S.P. 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 1st year students. At present all 1st, 2nd and 3rd 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 J.C.S.P. teachers during the school year.

Initiatives Granted for 2024/25

Initiative Name	€ Grant
Being Literate	€550
Christmas Celebration	€108
Digital Device	€1350
Home Economics	€450
Modern Languages	€225
Reading Challenge	€450
Science	€450
Total	€3583

PROFILING

This is the gathering of information in relation to J.C.S.P. students. General progress of students as well as the actual statements being completed will be monitored by subject teachers. It has been agreed that the profiling will occur in March/April of third year. The co-ordinator takes responsibility for meeting teachers individually to discuss profiling.

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 using the relevant J.C.S.P. subject and cross curricular statements 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-ordinator.

RECORD KEEPING

Teachers keep their own records of students' progress through subject statements. Examples of good work are uploaded on to Digital Portfolios. Digital Portfolios are an online platform for students to showcase examples of their best work in each subject. Showcasing good work is integral to J.C.S.P. and teachers are encouraged to promote student engagement with their digital portfolios. Student profiling is the responsibility of the subject teachers, and the collating of final student profiling is the responsibility of the coordinator at the end of third year.

CROSS CURRICULAR WORK

We will incorporate Cross-curricular work where possible with our J.C.S.P. 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 and an annual school Show. These activities involve a number of cross curricular statements. We also address cross-curricular statements through the implementation of DEIS Literacy and Numeracy strategies, study skills and some SPHE and CSPE statements.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

In order to aid staff members involved in J.C.S.P. the following steps are taken:

- Support in all areas of J.C.S.P. from Co-ordinator and team
- Regular communication from the core team to whole staff
- Time for meeting (core team)
- Links to the online statements on the CMCO staff digital hub
- In-service induction for new teachers
- 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 J.C.S.P. in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. The school frequently contacts parents/guardians with emphasis on passing on “good news”. Events such as the open evening, Christmas celebration, make a book exhibition, sending postcards, award certification and the awarding of statements are all examples of this. Parents are also invited to attend our J.C.S.P. 1st year Christmas celebration in December and 3rd year graduation ceremony in May.

Parents/guardians 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. We use Compass to update parents/guardians regularly.

REVIEW

This policy is due for review in April 2027.

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 J.C.S.P core team for the school year 2022/23

Helen Wallace	Co Ordinator of J.C.S.P.
Ann Conroy	Programme Co Ordinator
Geraldine Cahill	Art Teacher and Learning Support
Caoimhe Geaney	Irish and Geography
Mary C Ryan	Home School Liaison Officer