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Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Thiobraid Árann
*Tipperary Education and
Training Board*

Coláiste Thulach Sheasta *Assessment and Reporting Policy 2021*



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Introduction

Coláiste Thulach Sheasta is a multi-denominational and co-educational post primary school under the patronage of Tipperary Education and Training Board. We are located in North Tipperary and have a current enrolment of 264 students.

This Assessment and Reporting Policy aligns to our Mission Statement to “maximise the potential of each student academically” and to Tipperary ETB core value of “Excellence in Education”.

This policy was developed in accordance with Section 22 of the Education Act 1998. Section 22 (2) (b) states that a school “**regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents**”.

This Assessment Policy will play a key role in striving to ensure that each student realises his/her full academic potential in a learning environment that reflects a culture of partnership between teachers, parents, and students. Management is committed to promoting a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation, and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment. Continuous improvement is facilitated by encouraging and supporting professional development and advocating collaborative reflection of practice.

The NCCA’s Glossary of Key Terms associated with Assessment and Reporting can be found in **Appendix 2** of this policy document.



Aims

The primary aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To create a consistent and standardised assessment procedure for monitoring and reporting achievement in the school
- Enable teachers to develop a coherent approach to assessment within departments on a whole school basis
- Optimise the opportunity for learners to become reflective and active participants in their learning
- To enhance teaching and pupil learning and build students' capacity to manage their own learning
- Outline a variety of assessment procedures that are used in our school
- Outline how feedback will enhance student achievement Outline the range of reporting that is used in the school

Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative Assessment (*Assessment of Learning, Assessment as Learning*) Summative Assessment (*Assessment for Learning*)

Our policy covers assessment *for* learning, assessment *as* learning and assessment *of* learning.

- **Assessment for learning** enables teachers to use information about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching. Teachers provide feedback to students about their learning and how to improve.
- **Assessment as Learning** is the use of ongoing self-assessment by students in order to monitor their own learning, ask questions and practise skills. Students use self-assessment and teacher feedback to reflect on their own learning, consolidate their understanding and work towards their learning goals.
- **Assessment of learning** is assessment for accountability purposes, to determine a student's level of performance on a specific task or at the conclusion of a unit of teaching and learning. The information gained from this kind of assessment is summative in nature and will be used in reporting.

Purpose

The Purposes of Assessment

- To ***raise expectations*** and standards and ***pave the way to excellence in education***
- To act as an incentive for students in the learning process
- To evaluate what a student has learned in a particular area
- To measure the progress of students over time
- To provide feedback to students in a timely and constructive manner
- To provide feedback to teachers on the success of particular teaching methodologies in the learning process
- To highlight difficulties and shortcomings in the learning process in order to develop intervention strategies
- To identify students who require extension activities such as learning support
- To encourage and increase the skills of self-assessment
- To ascertain whether it is appropriate for a student to continue studying in any given subject area.
- To keep records of attainment that will inform parents through the school's reporting process
- To encourage parents to take an active role in, and a shared responsibility for, their child's learning and education
- To help parents to understand and support the progress their child is making and to monitor their child's progress throughout their time in the school

Forms of Assessment

General Guidelines

- The form that these *informal* and *formal* assessments will take, are dependent on the subject area being assessed and will vary from subject to subject.
- Certain forms of assessment may often times be unique to a particular subject.
- All forms of assessment will strive to meet the additional needs of students in the classroom when they arise.
- Classroom assessment strategies may be differentiated depending on the needs of the child. Visual aids, hearing aids, spelling waivers, increased time and dictionaries amongst others, may be used from time to time, as determined by the individual subject teacher.
- Where feasible, and as determined by each department plan, common assessments across a year group will be used in each subject area. This will provide for increased cooperation and a common benchmark across each subject area.
- Students are expected to treat all forms of assessment with respect. Any student who willingly fails to participate fully, or who acts in a disrespectful way towards any form of assessment in the school will be dealt with accordingly.

Informal Assessment

- The most common forms of assessment used in the school are of an informal nature, and these take place regularly in the classroom.
- Where appropriate, teachers will keep records of these assessments to provide an insight into a student's progress over time and to fully inform the learning process.
- Informal Assessments methods include:
 - Effective questioning in class
 - Oral and Aural Language Assessment in class
 - Anticipation Exercises
 - Varied strategies (*see appendix 1*)
 - Brainstorm
 - Quizzes: Kahoot
 - Essays
 - Assignments
 - Research
 - Reading
 - Discussion
 - Worksheets
 - Written classwork
 - Self/Peer Assessment
 - Reflection on feedback
 - Sample exam questions
 - Homework

Formal Assessment

The following formal (summative) assessments take place in school.

1. End of Unit of Learning Test

- Conducted at the discretion of the teacher at the end of a Unit of Learning.
- These formal tests are a vital component in providing feedback to teachers, students and parents, on the level of each student's attainment and learning in that specific subject area. Students will be asked to reflect on teacher feedback in the company of their parents.
- Constructive feedback will be given by teachers to students who partake in these tests, and the results of these tests will be used in the school's formal reporting structure where appropriate.

2. House Exams

October Midterm	Christmas Exams	PRE-EXAMS	Summer Exams
3 rd , 6 th and LCA2	1 st , 2 nd , TY, 5 th , LCA1	3 rd , 6 th and LCA2	1 st , 2 nd , TY, 5 th , LCA1

- These exams are highly regarded, and this is recognised by students, parents, and teachers alike. The purpose of these exams is to measure student learning and attainment in each subject area, and to give students experience in sitting formal exams similar in nature to the state exams.
- All house exams will follow the same operating rules as state exams.
- 3rd and 6th Year students will undertake Pre-Junior Cycle and Pre-Leaving Cert Mock Exams in January/February each year to prepare them for their state exams in June.
- These mock exams are seen as being very beneficial to the students in measuring their progress in their Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert years.
- Students will gain valuable experience in time management and answering technique through sitting these mock exams.
- The results of these mock exams will form the basis for the Pre-Junior Cycle and Pre-Leaving Cert Reports sent out in March/April.
- 3rd Year and 6th Year students do not sit any formal house exams at the end of May, and do not receive a Summer Report.
- In some instances, particularly at Junior Cycle, teachers may favour using classroom-based assessments, assignments and/or project work instead of using formal house exams. Our focus at all times on the welling of the child and the implications of over assessment.

3. State Exams

- The school will strive to ensure that all 3rd, 6th Year and LCA students participate - as directed by the State Exams Commission - in the many assessments that make up the Junior Cycle, Leaving Cert and Leaving Cert Applied exams.
- These assessments which may include orals, course work, practical work, portfolio work amongst others, will be operated in accordance with the regulations set down by the State Examinations Commission.

4. **Classroom Based Assessments** - In the case of each subject, two structured Classroom-Based Assessments will be completed (*Short Courses will complete one Classroom-Based Assessment*). One of these Classroom-Based Assessments will take place in second year, and the other during third year. Each assessment will be drawn from a variety of types of assessment, which may include project tasks, oral language tasks, investigations, practical tasks, field studies and artistic performance.
5. **Assessment Tasks** - After completing the second Classroom-Based Assessments, students will complete a written Assessment Task on what they have learned and the skills and competences that they have developed in that assessment. The Assessment Task, along with the final examination at the end of third year, will be marked by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).
6. **Oral/Aural Examinations** – Oral examinations in Gaeilge and Modern Foreign Languages usually take place around March/April and are assessed by an external examiner.

7. **Project Work/Course Work/Assignment**

Junior Cycle	Leaving Cert Established
Engineering Graphics Wood Technology	Agricultural Science Art Construction Studies D.C.G Economics Geography History Home Economics LCVP

8. **Practical Examinations/Performance**

Junior Cycle	Leaving Cert Applied	Leaving Cert Established
Home Economics Music Visual Art	Agriculture & Horticulture Graphics & Construction	Art Construction Studies Engineering Physical Education Music Physical Education

Other Assessments – the school may engage in other forms of assessment from time to time.

1. **CAT4** – administered to incoming 1st years. The results of these assessments are used to:
 - Identify the potential of students at an early stage
 - Guide Resource and Learning Support teachers
 - Allow teachers to plan for mixed ability in the classroom
 - Identify student needs and devise suitable programme of support
 - Develop Student Support Files in conjunction with parents, SENCO and school management
 - Apply for reasonable accommodations for state exams where applicable
2. **DATS** – administered to all Transition Year and/or 5th Year students to assist in their investigation of possible college and career choices.
3. **NEPS** -The school's NEPS psychologist, in consultation with school management, may carry out psychological assessments and other assessments on students at different times throughout the year.
4. **Numeracy and Literacy Testing** - This is assessed in line with our DEIS plan.
5. **Beep Test** – In Physical Education to assess the fitness levels of each student.

Formative Assessment

Formative Assessment

Assessment is **formative** when either *formal* or *informal* procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process and used to adapt teaching to meet student needs.

The process permits teachers and students to collect information about student progress, and to suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach to instruction and the student's approach to learning.

Assessment *for/as* learning covers all of the aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning.

Implementing Formative Assessment Practices

Sharing Learning Intentions

- Teachers create statements that clearly describe what the teacher wants the students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities.
- Learning intentions are always linked to one or more learning outcomes in the specification.
- They aim to help students focus on tasks and improve the quality of the student work

Creating and Co-creating Success Criteria

- Success criteria are linked to learning intentions.
- They are developed by the teacher and/or the student to show what a student should **know, understand** and **value** at the end of a unit of learning.
- They help the teacher and student to make judgements about the quality of student learning.

Effective Questioning and Classroom Discussion

- Effective questioning focuses on **why** you are asking the question in the first place
- Teachers plan their questioning, so they are linked to the learning intentions.
- Questions are differentiated and graded in difficulty
- Teachers plan questions so that they are mainly open in order to push on the learning and develop students critical thinking skills
- Purpose of questions:
 - To prompt students to reflect on their conceptual understanding
 - To ask a student to clarify a vague comment
 - To prompt students to explore attitudes, values, feelings
 - To prompt students to see a concept from another perspective
 - To prompt students to support their assertions and interpretations
 - To prompt students to respond to one another
 - To extend and deepen students' thinking

- To ask students to predict possible outcomes
- To prompt students to connect and organise information
- To ask students to apply a principle or formula
- To ask students to illustrate a concept with an example
- Use of Bloom's Taxonomy (**appendix 3**) is encouraged to support questioning

Effective Feedback

- Relates to learning intentions & success criteria
- Focused on the quality of the student work rather than the student
- Makes the learning more visible for both the teacher & student
- Identifies student success and achievement
- Indicates suggestions for improvement
- Allows time for students to act on it and improvement to take place
- Prompts student thinking and allows for the student to reflect on the feedback.

Self and Peer Assessment

- Teachers equip their students with the desire and the capacity to take charge of their learning through developing the skills of self-assessment
- Self-assessment and peer assessment are interrelated and can be integrated with teacher assessment.
- Self and peer assessment requires students to reflect on their own learning and anticipate what should be done to improve it.
- Through these types of assessment, students can develop their own metacognitive abilities, including monitoring their own learning, developing the ability to judge and evaluating their own peers' work as well as making appropriate decisions about what to do next.
- Self-assessment improves students' self-esteem.

KEY SKILLS

Assessment is not focussed solely on assessing student's knowledge but also to assess understanding and the dispositions they are developing and the skills that they are learning.

In Junior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills

- Managing Information and Thinking
- Managing Myself
- Communicating
- Working with others
- Being creative
- Being literate
- Being numerate
- Staying well

In Senior Cycle the emphasis is on the following Key Skills

- Communicating
- Working with Others
- Being Personally Effective
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Information Processing

Summative Assessment

Assessment at Junior Cycle

In all subject specifications at Junior Cycle assessment is defined as follows:

Assessment in education involves gathering, interpreting, and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways, such as to record and report achievement, to determine appropriate routes for learners to take through a differentiated curriculum, or to identify specific areas of difficulty or strength for a given learner.

While different techniques may be employed for formative, diagnostic and summative purposes, the focus of the assessment and reporting is on the improvement of student learning. To do this it must fully reflect the aim of the curriculum.

The Junior Cycle places a strong emphasis on assessment as part of the learning process. This requires a more varied approach to assessment, ensuring that the assessment method or methods chosen are fit for purpose, timely and relevant to the students.

Assessment in Junior Cycle will optimise the opportunity for students to become reflective and active participants in their learning and for teachers to support this. This rests upon the provision for learners of opportunities to negotiate success criteria against which the quality of their work can be judged by peer, self and teacher assessment; and upon the quality of focused feedback, they get in support of their learning

Providing focused feedback to students on their learning is a critical component of high-quality assessment and a key factor in building students' capacity to manage their own learning and their motivation to stick with a complex task or problem.

Assessment is most effective when it moves beyond marks and grades, and reporting focuses not just on how the student has done in the past but on the next steps for further learning. This approach will ensure that assessment takes place as close as possible to the point of learning. Final assessment still has an important role to play but is only one element of a broader approach to assessment.

Essentially, the purpose of assessment at this stage of education is to support learning.

Assessment and Reporting for JCPA

Business Studies

The assessment of business studies for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-based Assessments**, Business in Action and Presentation, and a **final assessment**. In addition, the second Classroom-Based Assessment will have a **written Assessment Task** that will be marked, along with the final assessment, by the SEC.

Engineering

The assessment of Engineering for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise of:

- two Classroom-Based Assessments: Engineering in action, and Research and development
- a project
- a written examination.

English

The assessment of English for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments** and a **Final Assessment**. In addition, the second classroom-based assessment will have a **written Assessment Task** that will be marked, along with the final assessment, by the State Examinations Commission.

Gaeilge

The assessment of Irish for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise of **two Classroom-Based Assessments**; Language portfolio and Communication Task; an **Assessment Task** and a **final examination**. The Classroom-Based Assessments will allow students to demonstrate their language, communicative, and interactive abilities in ways not possible in a formal examination. The assessments will be closely related to the day-to-day work in the classroom. There will be an Assessment Task to complete after the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The Assessment Task will be related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based. This Assessment Task will be sent to the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for marking along with the final examination.

Geography

The assessment of Geography for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise of:

- two Classroom-Based Assessments: Geography in the news; and My geography. In addition
- the second Classroom-Based Assessment will have a written Assessment Task that will be prepared and marked, along with a final examination, by the State Examinations Commission

Graphics

The assessment of Graphics for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise of:

- two Classroom-Based Assessments; Communicating through sketching and Graphical presentation skills
- a project
- a final examination

History

The assessment of history for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments**: The past in my place and A life in time. Students complete a formal **written Assessment Task** to be submitted to the State Examinations Commission for marking along with the **final examination** for history. It is allocated 10% of the marks used to determine the grade awarded by the State Examinations Commission. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based.

Home Economics

The assessment of Home Economics for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise; **two Classroom-Based Assessments**, Creative Textiles and a Food Literacy Skills Brief; **a practical food skills examination**; and **a written examination**. All assessments will be at a common level. The second Classroom-Based Assessment will include preparation for the practical food skills examination.

The practical food skills examination and the written examination will be marked by the State Examinations Commission.

Maths

The assessment of mathematics for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments**: CBA 1(*Mathematical Investigation*); and CBA 2(*Statistical Investigation*). In addition, the second Classroom-Based Assessment will have a **written Assessment Task** that will be marked, along with a **final examination**, by the State Examinations Commission.

Modern Foreign Languages

The assessment of Junior Cycle modern foreign languages for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments** (Oral communication and the student language portfolio), **an Assessment Task** linked to the Student Language Portfolio and **a final examination**. The Assessment Task and the final examination will be assessed by the State Examinations Commission.

Music

The assessment of Music for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments**: Composition Portfolio and a Programme Note; **a practical examination** and **a written examination**. All assessments will be at a common level. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) will assess the practical examination (held towards the end of third year) and the written examination in June.

Science

The assessment of Junior Cycle Science for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments** (Extended experimental investigation (EEI) and Science in society investigation (SSI)), **an Assessment Task** related to the learning outcomes on which the second Classroom-Based Assessment is based, and **a final examination**. The Assessment Task and the final examination will be assessed by the State Examinations Commission. The content and format of the Assessment Task may vary from year to year.

CSPE (Short Course)

Ongoing assessment can support the student in their learning journey and in preparing for the Classroom-Based Assessment related to this short course. Students will complete at least three citizenship actions as part of their learning across the three strands of the CSPE short course. Students are expected to create an Action Record for one of these as their Classroom-Based Assessment.

SPHE (Short Course)

Students will complete one Classroom-Based Assessment based on learning outcomes in more than one strand of the course.

Wood Technology

The assessment of Wood Technology for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise:

- two Classroom-Based Assessments: Wood science in our environment, and Self-analysis and evaluation
- a project
- a written examination

Visual Art

Visual Art is a practical subject. The assessment of Visual Art for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise **two Classroom-Based Assessments**: From process to realisation and communicate and reflect. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) will mark the development work and realised work that is generated from the initial research, planning and experimentation in the second Classroom-Based Assessment. One piece of realised work undertaken in either Classroom-Based Assessment must be realised in three dimensions.

There is no final examination in this practical subject.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing will be reported on through the JCPA for the first time in 2021. Wellbeing will show in a separate area of the JCPA. It is in this area that the school will report on student achievement in CSPE, SPHE and PE.

Other Areas of Learning

In the 'other areas of learning' the school may report on other learning experiences and events that the student has participated in during curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular aspects of the Junior Cycle Programme in the school e.g.

- Student engagement with co-curricular or extra-curricular activities offered by the school such as **engaging in a science fair**, participation in the school's **sporting activities** or **debating**
- Specific learning opportunities that do not form part of subjects or short courses, for example, **leadership training**; activities relating to **guidance**; membership of **school clubs** or **societies**; membership of their school's **student council**, **sporting achievements**, **attendance record**.

Assessment at Senior Cycle

Assessment at senior cycle takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways. Assessment can and should be supportive of learning.

Assessment in the classroom

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and, as such, it is used to support and improve learning by helping learners and teachers to identify next steps in their learning. In this sense, the most valuable assessment takes place at the site of learning where learners receive support and guidance. Learning is best supported in the classroom context when clear goals are established between teacher and learner and when images of successful learning can be shared by reference to those goals. The process of providing effective feedback to learners is supported through the statements of learning outcomes in syllabus documents.

Assessment in the State Examinations

- **Formal assessment** in senior cycle, as used to test and certify achievement, is managed through the State examinations, administered by the State Examinations Commission.
- A broad range of assessment methods are used across the range of Leaving Certificate subjects, including
 - oral examinations
 - aural examinations
 - coursework
 - practical examinations

At the end of senior cycle, students who have followed **the Leaving Certificate (Established)** take the Leaving Certificate examination.

- Student achievement in this examination is directly linked to processes of selection for courses of study in further and higher education.
- In addition to the examinations taken by other students, students who follow **the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme** take an examination paper and submit a portfolio in the Link Modules.
- Students who follow **the Leaving Certificate Applied programme** take a final examination and also accumulate credits over the two years of study. Further information on the assessment of the various subjects is found in the syllabus of each subject.

General assessment information is available on www.examinations.ie

Assessment in Transition Year

There is NO state examination at the end of Transition Year

Assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis and includes school-based assessment including

- projects
- portfolio of work
- oral
- aural
- practical activities
- written activities
- assessment of modules
- completion of exams for certification purposes

Assessment may be conducted by teachers or external examiners or work placement supervisors

Assessment in Leaving Certificate Applied

LCA Modes of Assessment

Satisfactory Completion of Modules + 90% Attendance

**62
Credits**

31%

- Evidence of completion of 4 Key Assignments for each module
- One credit per course module in which there is a final exam
- Two credits per course module in which there is NO final exam

7 Student Tasks @ 10 Credits each

**70
Credits**

35%

Vocational Preparation

Vocational Education (x2)

General Education

Contemporary Issue

Personal Reflection

Practical Achievement

Final Examination

**68
Credits**

34%

English &
Communications

Vocational
Specialism x
2

Languages x
2

Social
Education

Mathematical
Applications

12 Credits

**12 Credits
each**

**6 Credits
each**

**10
Credits**

10 Credits

TOTAL

**200
Credits**

100%

Reporting

Types of Reporting: The school has in place systems and structures to report on student progress right across the school year. Ongoing reporting does not confine itself to the results of tests or assignment.

In relating to student progress, it is helpful to think of ongoing reporting as involving assessment that is both formative (assessment *for/as* learning) and summative (assessment *of* learning)

Ongoing reporting on student progress can take a variety of forms at Newport College

Examples include:

- Informal oral and written feedback
- Student diary – communicating assessment results
- Signature of parent on assessment
- Parent-teacher meetings
- Discussions with class teacher/tutor, year head/tutor
- Student learning logs, reflections, portfolios, and diaries
- End-of-unit/-topic/-term/-year reports (Midterm/Christmas/Summer)
- 3rd and 6th year midterm and pre-exam reports

Ongoing reporting can reflect many aspects of school life

Examples include:

- Our school's calendar and its teaching/learning programmes
- The school's communication and engagement with parents/guardians
- Students' learning progress and achievement in subjects and short courses
- Engagement with the learning behaviours and dispositions of students
- The wellbeing of students
- Student participation and achievements in extra-curricular activities
- The results of classroom-based-assessments (CBAs)
- Areas such as attendance, punctuality, and behaviour.
- The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement
- Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied results

Guiding Principles of Reporting

Effective Reporting should

1. Encourage authentic engagement with parents
2. Provide opportunities for students through feedback to reflect on their learning
3. Value the professional judgements of teachers
4. Use the language of learning to provide effective feedback
5. Be manageable and not take time away from learning and teaching
6. Clearly communicate students' progress in learning
7. Provide information on a broad range of achievement
8. Be sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students and take an inclusive approach

Engagement with parents

- The new arrangements for reporting place a significant focus on the relationship between students, teachers, and parents as a means of improving learning
- Parents are valued as having a key role in the learning process and we encourage all parents to get involved.
- Parental engagement in their child's learning is encouraged by management and seen as fundamental to achieving the best educational outcome for all students.
- We provide a warm, welcoming environment for parents when they visit our school. Parents are welcomed to the school for informal events such as coffee mornings, workshops and school displays to strengthen parent and school partnerships.
- Parent teacher meetings are valued by parents, teachers and management. We involve students in our parent-teacher meetings. Parents who cannot attend are facilitated with alternative meeting times or via phone calls.
- We keep contact with parents about student progress throughout the year in various ways. Contact is made with parents regarding their child's progress when necessary.
- Our school looks for ways to encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. We reach out to try to engage with 'hard to reach' parents. We are aware of issues of equality and diversity when we are engaging with parents
- We make good use of technology to share students' progress
- We share any proposed changes to our assessment and reporting approaches with parents well in advance of the changes being made
- We make good use of reports and other information from primary schools to inform learning in first year of junior cycle
- We have student-led events where students share their progress with their parents

Reporting Using Descriptors

In Junior Cycle

The descriptors for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) are as follows:

Percentage Range	Grade
90 or over	Distinction
75 but less than 90	Higher Merit
55 but less than 75	Merit
40 but less than 55	Achieved
20 but less than 40	Partially Achieved
Less than 20	Not Graded

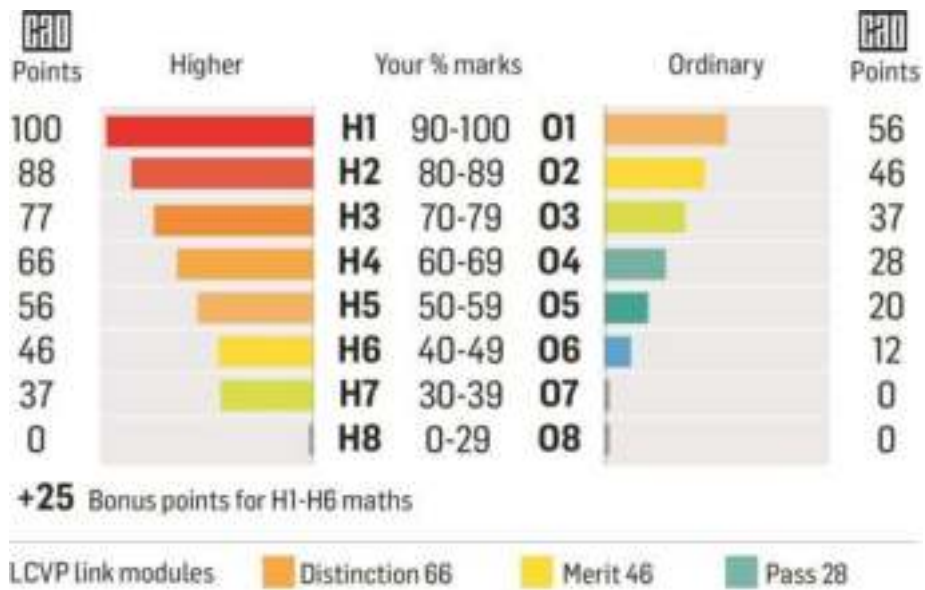
The descriptors for Classroom Based Assessments are as follows:

Exceptional
Above Expectation
In Line with Expectations
Yet to Meet Expectations

In Transition Year

Marks	Percentage	Grade
425 - 500	85% - 100%	Distinction
350 - 424	70% - 84%	Higher Merit
275 - 349	55% - 74%	Merit
0 - 274	< 55%	Certificate of Participation

In Leaving Certificate



In Leaving Certificate Applied

Marks	Percentage	Grade
170 -200	85% - 100%	Distinction
140 – 169	70% - 84%	Merit
120 – 139	60% - 69%	Pass
0 -120	< 60%	Record of Experience

Students who acquire less than 120 credits or who leave the programme early will receive a 'Record of Experience@'

Policy Adoption and Review

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 22nd September 2015. It has been reviewed and updated to take account of curriculum changes. The most recent review took place in November 2021.

The Senior Management Team will undertake to review this policy every two years in consultation with teaching staff, the student council, a member of the parent's association and the Board of Management.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website.

Following consultations with all parties, this policy review is now complete and has been discussed at the Board of Management Meeting dated 9th November 2021.

Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the subsequent Board of Management meeting.

Signed	
Position	Chairperson of Board of Management
Date	
Signed	
Position	Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management
Date	

APPENDIX 1

Classroom Strategies			
Strategy	Explanation	Key Skills	Assessment
3-2-1	<p>This strategy gives students a structure to record their understanding of what they have learned.</p> <p>It also gives teachers the opportunity to identify aspects of the lesson that need more attention, as well as areas of student interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Being literate • Being creative 	<p>Assess for understanding by listening to student responses using these for forward planning. Feedback from responses can inform future planning</p>
Think. Pair. Share	<p>This strategy is designed to provide students time and structure for thinking on a given topic, enabling them to develop individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being creative 	<p>Assess for understanding by listening to student responses</p>
JIGSAW	<p>This is a cooperative learning activity. Students form a home team and are set a home team problem. They break up into 'expert groups' and gain expert knowledge that feeds into the overall problem. Just as in a jigsaw puzzle, each student's part is essential for the completion and full understanding of the home team problem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Working with others • Being literate 	<p>Short quiz at the end to recap/summarise the learning</p> <p>Observation of group activity</p> <p>Questioning both individually and in groups throughout the activity</p>
Assigning Group Roles	<p>Group work allows students to learn interactively as well as develop interpersonal and collaborative skills. Students expected to participate actively prepare themselves better for class</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being numerate • Being creative • Staying well 	<p>As well as playing their role, students listen to each other, carefully evaluating their own and other student's responses to the task in hand.</p> <p>Students work as a group tackling more complex assessment tasks set by the teacher.</p> <p>Students develop their own ideas by listening to others.</p>

Strategy	Explanation	Key Skills	Assessment
Anticipation Exercise	<p>This is a comprehension strategy that is used before reading to activate students' prior knowledge and build curiosity about a new topic.</p> <p>This strategy also stimulates student interest in a topic and sets a purpose for reading, listening or watching. They teach students to make predictions, anticipate and verify predictions. They will connect new information to prior knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Being literate 	A useful tool for formative assessment before, during and after reading
Blue Sky Thinking	This strategy is a means of kick-starting a student's imagination and compels students to provide a variety of options or ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being creative 	Assess for understanding by listening to student responses.
Brainstorm	<p>Brainstorm is a process encouraging students to generate ideas in a creative manner.</p> <p>It gives students a chance to tap into previous knowledge and form connections with the current topic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being creative 	The teacher observes and listens to student responses to the question in hand
Classification	<p>This strategy allows students to demonstrate an understanding of relationships between things and helps them clarify concepts.</p> <p>Used collaboratively, students develop communication skills and can deepen their understanding of the topic in hand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being creative 	Observe student understanding of material and inform future lessons
Diamond 9	This is a collaborative strategy to help students prioritise key factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being creative 	Students explain their reasoning for the arrangement of factors on the diamond

Strategy	Explanation	Key Skills	Assessment
Dotmocracy	<p>In this strategy students work together through group vote to make informed decisions, to prioritise and reach consensus. It could be used in a Tutor Class, Year Group or Student Council to come to a democratic decision.</p> <p>Dotmocracy gives every student an equal chance to have their opinion recorded even in the largest of groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate • Being numerate • Being creative • 	Can be used to inform the next steps in the learning process
Falsehoods	Gives all students an opportunity to evaluate a series of statements which the teacher and/or other students devise and decide on whether they are true or false.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Working with others • Being literate 	<p>Assess for understanding by listening to student responses</p> <p>Check the whole class response at the end of the activity</p>
Peer Assessment using Success Criteria	Success criteria summarise the key steps or ingredients the student needs in order to fulfil the learning intention - the main things to do, include or focus on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Being literate 	Peer assessment can be used to assess the project based on the success criteria. The success criteria can be used as framework for feedback from the teacher also.
Peer Feedback	<p>Provides students with an opportunity to learn from each other and improve their own work.</p> <p>This strategy complements Peer Assessment Using Success Criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communicating • Being literate 	Students are peer assessed using criteria. The teacher can observe how the students apply the success criteria to the homework, Observation of the students' comments gives further insight into the students understanding of the task and the application of success criteria.
Kahoot	<p>Quizzes are an engaging way of activating prior knowledge and revising content. Kahoot is a quiz-based classroom response system. It displays the quiz in a fun and exciting way that is appealing to students.</p> <p>It gives teachers the opportunity to ask thought provoking questions, find out previous knowledge or revise a topic in a fun way</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Communicating • Being literate • Being numerate 	<p>Assess for understanding by observing student responses using these for forward planning. Feedback from responses can inform future planning.</p> <p>Students are given instant feedback to their answers.</p>

Strategy	Explanation	• Key Skills	Assessment
KWL	<p>This strategy serves several purposes: it elicits prior knowledge of the text; it sets a purpose for reading and it helps students monitor their comprehension.</p> <p>By being aware of students' interests and prior knowledge the teacher has the ability to create projects and assignments that are challenging and that the students will enjoy.</p> <p>A KWL chart is a tool that can be used to inform teaching as well as guide student learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Being literate 	<p>The KWL chart is a useful way to assess your instruction informally.</p> <p>Have students complete the Know and Want to Know sections of the chart prior to the lesson and the learned section after the lesson is finished. Did the students successfully master the intentions of the lesson?</p>
Through the Lens	<p>This strategy involves students interpreting, summarising, comparing and contrasting information using a different form of representation, generating new information and knowledge by adapting, designing and representing information digitally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	<p>Assessment is based on the criteria agreed upon by the whole class at the beginning of the activity. A reflective exercise on what the students learned through</p>
Mindmap	<p>This strategy gives students a structure to summarise and represent visually what they have learned. It improves long-term memory of factual information.</p> <p>After teaching a topic coggle could be used to summarise, organise and visualise the topic. It could also be used as a brainstorming exercise to summarise prior knowledge at the beginning of a topic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	<p>Teachers can assess student understanding of a topic. Peer assessment and feedback can give students the opportunity to improve their mind maps.</p>
Placemat	<p>This activity gives all students the opportunity to work individually, to share ideas and learn from each other in a cooperative small-group discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	<p>Assess for understanding by listening to student responses</p>
Ranking Ladder	<p>Provides all students with an opportunity to engage in thinking at the evaluation level of Bloom's taxonomy.</p> <p>A Ranking Ladder requires students to place items on rungs of a ladder in order from least to most important, as a group activity it allows students to be challenged as to why they rank one item above or below another.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	<p>Assess for higher order thinking skills by listening to student responses</p>

Strategy	Explanation	Key Skills	Assessment
Stop & Jot	<p>This strategy gives students the opportunity to respond to questions in writing. Asking students to think and write about what they are learning promotes retention and comprehension.</p> <p>These checks for understanding help students make sense of what they are learning before moving on in the lesson.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being creative 	Check for understanding by reading the students' responses as you move around the room
Survey	This strategy encourages students to gather information relevant to subject or topic in question. It is particularly relevant to the key skill managing information and thinking. The students learn to design quality questions and subsequently analyse the results in order to come to valid conclusions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	The final form can be assessed by looking at the quality of the questions developed. Have the students made evidence-based conclusions? Feedback from responses can inform future planning
Randomisers	This strategy enables a "no hands up" approach to classroom participation. Each student is chosen at random using an instrument or application (e.g., lollipop-sticks or a random name generator) when student participation is required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication 	Assessment is broader and more random throughout the class, encouraging students to stay on task and allowing a greater variety of students to answer or participate
Venn Diagram	This strategy allows students to graphically display the similarities and differences between two items or themes. It works very well with groups allowing oral processing of learning. A very effective strategy for comparing and contrasting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being numerate • Being creative • Working with others 	Assess for understanding by listening to student responses. Peer assessment can be used at the end of the activity.
Padlet	This is an online application 'a blank sheet of paper' that allows students to express their ideas on a given topic. Padlet allows students to post content relevant to a topic e.g. images, text, video, audio.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information and thinking • Managing myself • Communication • Being literate • Being creative • Working with others 	Assess for understanding by observing students' responses using these for forward planning. Feedback from responses can inform future planning.

SOURCE: https://jct.ie/wholeschool/classroom_strategies

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
Assessment	Assessment is the process of generating, gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting evidence of learning in individuals, groups or systems. Educational assessment provides information about progress in learning, and achievement in developing skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes.
Assessment Task	The Assessment Task is a written task completed by students during class time and is sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking. The Assessment Task is specified by the NCCA and is related to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task for each subject will provide all the necessary details and they are also available in the Assessment Toolkit.
Assessment method	This is a term that encompasses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to collect information from students about their progress towards attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be learned. The assessment method chosen should allow for the generation of evidence and provision of timely feedback in order to make appropriate instructional decisions and improve student learning.
Blended learning	This refers to the practice of using both online and real-time learning experiences when teaching students. This combination of content delivery allows for both methods to support and complement each other and personalise the learning process. This can also be referred to as 'hybrid learning' or 'mixed mode learning'.
Classroom-Based Assessment	Classroom-Based Assessments in subjects and short courses provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in ways not possible in a formal examination. Classroom-Based Assessments, facilitated by the classroom teacher, are undertaken by students in a defined time period, within class contact time and to a national timetable. (Click 'subjects' on the left for further subject specific information).
Diagnostic assessment	This is a type of assessment that is intended to diagnose the strengths and/or areas of need in students prior to a learning activity. It allows for the identification and provision of the appropriate interventions and pedagogical approaches necessary to scaffold the learning to meet the individual learning needs of students.
Differentiated instruction	Differentiated instruction refers to the wide range of strategies, techniques and approaches that are used to support student learning and help every student to achieve and to realise his or her potential.

Examples of student work	Annotated samples of authentic student work are published online to illustrate levels of achievement in relation to features of quality. They are developed so that teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders can familiarise themselves with achievement levels.
Expectations for Learners/Students	An umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work and demonstrates the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised.
Features of quality	Features of quality are the statements in the short course/subject specifications that support teachers in making judgements about the quality of student work for the purpose of awarding achievement grades for certification. As success criteria are closely linked to learning intentions and based on the day-to-day processes in the classroom, student learning will gradually come to reflect the requirements set out in the features of quality which are used for assessment and reporting purposes.
Formative assessment	Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process and used to adapt teaching to meet student needs. The process permits teachers and students to collect information about student progress and to suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach to instruction and the student's approach to learning. Assessment for learning covers all aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning.
Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	Plans developed in schools which detail the teaching and learning approaches intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, and aspirations of individual students.
Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement	The JCPA is the award that students will receive at the end of their junior cycle. The award will reward achievement across all areas of learning and assessment including ongoing, formative assessment; Classroom-Based Assessments; and SEC grades, which include results from the final examinations and the Assessment Tasks.
Learning intentions	A learning intention for a lesson or series of lessons is a statement, created by the teacher, which describes clearly what the teacher wants the students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities.
Learning outcomes	Learning outcomes are statements in curriculum specifications to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning.
Moderation	Moderation is a collaborative process that enables teachers to reach consistency in their judgements of student work against agreed success criteria or features of quality. The moderation process involves teachers discussing the qualities demonstrated in examples of student work to reach agreement about the standard of that work.

Ongoing assessment	As part of their classroom work, students engage in assessment activities that can be either formative or summative in nature. Teachers assess as part of their daily practice by observing and listening as students carry out tasks, by looking at what they write and make, and by considering how they respond to, frame and ask questions. Teachers use this assessment information to help students plan the next steps in their learning. Periodically, this assessment will be in more structured, formalised settings where teachers will need to obtain a snapshot of the students' progress in order to make decisions on future planning and to report on progress. This may involve the students in doing projects, investigations, case studies and/or tests and may occur at defined points in the school calendar.
Peer assessment	Peer assessment is the assessment of the work of others of equal status. In the context of student learning, peer assessment is used by students to estimate the worth of other students' work with reference to specific and agreed criteria.
Reliability	This is the extent to which the assessment would give the same result if repeated. Reliability in assessment means that high quality evidence and information is provided on student performance and is comparable (i.e., it stands up when compared to judgements across learners, departments and schools).
Reporting	The communication of information on the results of assessment of student achievement.
Self-assessment	Self-assessment is the involvement of students in making judgements about their own work, based on features of quality. It is a measure of the extent to which their own work has met these features of quality.
Specification	A subject or short course specification details the intended learning outcomes, and how they can be achieved and demonstrated. The specification outlines how the learning in any subject or short course is linked to particular statements of learning and key skills.
Standardised test	This is a test that is given in a consistent way to all the test takers and uses uniform procedures for administration and scoring. This term is primarily associated with large-scale tests administered to sizeable populations of students and allows for comparison of relative performance of individual students or groups of students. These tests will provide an additional indicator of student progress and are devised to supplement and not replace the teacher's professional judgement.
Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting	Following the completion of a Classroom-Based Assessment, teachers will engage in review meetings, where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build common understanding about the quality of student learning. (See 'Review Meeting' for further details).

Success criteria	Success criteria are linked to learning intentions. They are developed by the teacher and/or the student and describe what success looks like. They help the teacher and student to make judgements about the quality of student learning.
Summative Assessment	Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or of a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the students' achievements and to determine whether and to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality.
Validity	This is the degree to which an assessment instrument accurately measures what it was designed to measure.

SOURCE: <https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary/>

Appendix 3

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to support questioning

Consider how you could use and adapt these question stems to help you vary the types of questions you ask in class.

Critical Thinking Skills

1 Knowledge Identification and recall of information	define fill in the blank list identify	label locate match memorise	name recall spell	state tell underline
	Who _____?	What _____?	Where _____?	When _____?
	How _____?	Describe _____?	What is _____?	
2 Comprehension Organisation and selection of facts and ideas	convert describe explain	interpret paraphrase put in order	restate re-el in your own words rewrite	summarize trace translate
	Re-tell _____ in your own words.	What is the main idea of _____?	What differences exist between _____?	Can you write a brief outline?
3 Application Use of facts rules and principles	apply compute conclude construct	demonstrate determine draw find out	give an example illustrate make operate	show solve state a rule or principle use
	How is _____ an example of _____?	How is _____ related to _____?	Why is _____ significant?	Do you know of another instance where _____?
	Could this have happened in _____?			
4 Analysis Separating a whole into component parts	analyse categorize classify compare	contrast debate deduct determine the factors	diagram differentiate dissect distinguish	examine infer specify
	What are the parts or features of _____?	Classify _____ according to _____.	Outline/diagram/web/map _____.	How does _____ compare/contrast with _____?
	What evidence can you present for _____?			
5 Synthesis Combining ideas to form a new whole	change combine compose construct create design	find an unusual way formulate generate invent originate plan	predict pretend produce rearrange reconstruct reorganise	revise suggest suppose visualize write
	What would you predict/infer from _____?	What ideas can you add to _____?	How would you create/design a new _____?	What solutions would you suggest for _____?
	What might happen if you combined _____ with _____?			
6 evaluation Developing opinions, judgements, or decisions	appraise choose compare conclude	decide defend evaluate give your opinion	judge justify prioritize rank	rate select support value
	Do you agree that _____? Explain.	What do you think about _____?	What is most important?	Prioritise _____ according to _____?
	How would you decide about _____?	What criteria would you use to assess _____?		

Credit - <http://www.teachthought.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/blooms-question-stems.jpg>

For more ideas on how to link Bloom's taxonomy to classroom questioning and assessment approaches go to <http://www.bloomstaxonomy.org/Blooms%20Taxonomy%20questions.pdf>