



FIRST YEAR SUBJECT INFORMATION

The purpose of this booklet is to give parents and students an outline of each subject offered by the school for the Junior Cycle. Please consult the NCCA website (<https://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/>) for more detailed information.

Junior Cycle Structure and Assessment

Lucan Community College engages with the Junior Cycle Programme to ensure that the 8 key skills and 24 statements of learning, described in the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, feature appropriately and progressively in the programmes offered to our junior cycle students.

Subjects will be assessed through Classroom-Based Assessments (during second year and/or third year), reported on to parents/guardians by the school, an Assessment Task (marked by the State Examination Commission (SEC)) in each subject and, in most subjects, a Final Examination set, held and marked by the SEC. The combination of the Assessment Task and the Final Examination, marked and awarded by the SEC, will generate a grade. Slightly modified assessment structures will apply in Visual Art, Music, Home Economics, and the Technology subjects and some changes were made during and post-Covid.

New Junior Certificate Grading System		
Percentage %	Grade Descriptor	Abbreviation (what you will see on your JC profile of achievement)
90-100	Distinction	DN
75-89	Higher Merit	HM
55-74	Merit	MT
40-54	Achieved	AC
20-39	Partially Achieved	PA
0-19	Not Graded	NG

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) have been introduced to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and skills and their ability to apply them in ways that may not be possible in an externally assessed examination. CBAs are assessed by the students' teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during junior cycle and in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which students will receive during the year after sitting their state examinations.

When assessing the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment against the learning outcomes, teachers will use four level descriptors: Exceptional, Above Expectations, In Line with Expectations, Yet to Meet Expectations.

We hope that you enjoyed our Open Day and managed to get a sense of the subjects we offer in Lucan Community College. The following pages gives you more information about our subjects.

Core Curriculum and Other Learning Experiences

These subjects are part of our compulsory curriculum and students can only absent themselves from one of these subjects with the permission of the Principal and only in very specific circumstances.

A. Gaeilge



Here in Lucan Community College, Roinn na Gaeilge value the individual abilities and goals of each of our students. Irish is taught at two levels in Junior Cycle, Ordinary and Higher. The aim for every academic year in the school is to further develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in a positive manner in Irish.

These aims are achieved through many different interactive activities based on the themes of themselves, family, environment and culture.

Seomra na Gaeilge is provided on a weekly basis for both Junior and Senior students. Here students can avail of a hot beverage, biscuits and practice their conversation in Irish. Irish Debating is also offered with students taking debating as an extra-curricular activity.



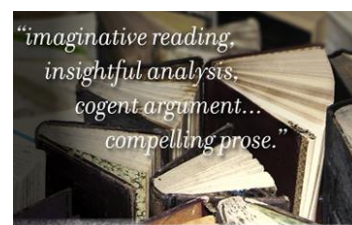
Transition Year and Leaving Cert Applied are provided in Lucan Community College and both courses offer Irish. Both syllabuses are provided in modules.

There are three modules in Transition Year for Irish:

1. Mé Fein – oral/aural based module on the student themselves and their environment.
2. Stair na Gaeilge – A study of the history of the Irish language and Irish literature including Irish superstitions and traditions.
3. Staidéir Scannáin/ Dráma – A study of a film or play depending on the level taken by the student at Junior Cycle. Both the film and play are curriculum based for the Senior Cycle. Students in 5th and 6th year usually have the opportunity to attend the play in a theatre.

B. English

The Junior Cycle English course reinforces and continues the work of the primary school in nurturing the intellectual, imaginative and emotional growth of each student.



Studying English at Junior Cycle Level provides an opportunity for students to gain pleasure and fulfilment from the different language activities. The course enables students at all levels to develop their personal language bases while expressing and symbolising a wide range of intellectual, imaginative, affective and sensuous experiences. During the three-year course students will have the opportunity to explore their critical consciousness. They build their confidence in the way they think, reflect, respond and communicate as well as realise their potential in the State Exam.

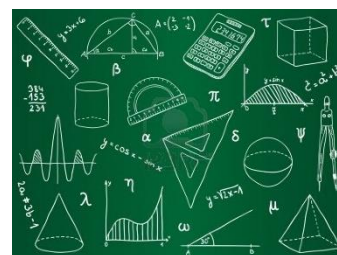
The course develops the students' proficiency in Personal, Social and Cultural Literacy.

C. Mathematics

What will students learn in Mathematics?

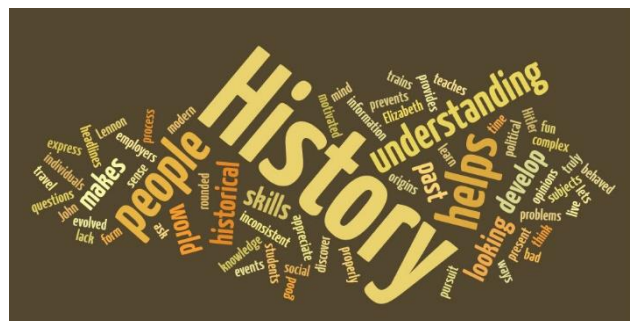
How will students learn Mathematics in school?

- use computer simulations
- do hands-on activities with real-life materials
- use a text book and answer maths problems
- take part in project work.



- asking questions
- solving maths problems for themselves
- keeping the work organised in an exercise book or file.

In the Junior Cycle we introduce students to the important role the core subject History plays in society today as much as we delve into the stories of the past. We provide our students with a wide range of events, issues, people and ways of life, so they can develop an objective understanding of causes, consequences, change and continuity and our roots in the contemporary world. This includes providing direction into local research and their independent learning through projects and assessments.



At Senior Level, we work towards deepening the skills of Junior Level and building a more reflective and critical understanding of the past through the curriculum content and the student's self-directed research topic. Here in Lucan CC we aim to foster the above skills in an interesting and stimulating environment, encouraging all students to work to their full potential and to come to a more comprehensive understanding of the past.

E. Geography



The Junior Cycle geography course aims to help students to make sense of their surroundings and the wider world. By studying their local environment and other areas students learn about people and their interrelationships.

They come to understand the natural and human processes and patterns present in these environments and they can learn to appreciate similarities and differences between places. Geography also provides opportunities to acquire a range of investigative, graphical and other skills. Geography encourages students to appreciate the interdependence of individuals, groups and communities. It promotes an understanding of, and respect for, the cultures and ways of life of peoples throughout the world and it fosters an informed sense of individual and community responsibility for environmental care. It also develops student's awareness of spatial patterns and map skills.

Students tend to enjoy geography and this is reflected in the high uptake at Leaving Certificate level.

F. Religious Education (RE)

Religious education aims to develop knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values to enable young people to come to an understanding of religion and its relevance to life, relationships, society and the wider world. It aims to develop the students' ability to examine questions of meaning, purpose and relationships, to help students understand, respect and appreciate people's expression of their beliefs and to facilitate dialogue and reflection on the diversity of beliefs and values that inform responsible decision- making and ways of living.



Students will complete two CBAs in RE. In 2nd Year, students complete CBA 1 - A person of commitment and in 3rd Year, students complete CBA 2 - The human search for meaning. CBAs provide students with an opportunity to actively engage in practical and meaningful learning experiences that are of personal interest and relevance to them. Some of the possibilities when engaging with the CBAs include:

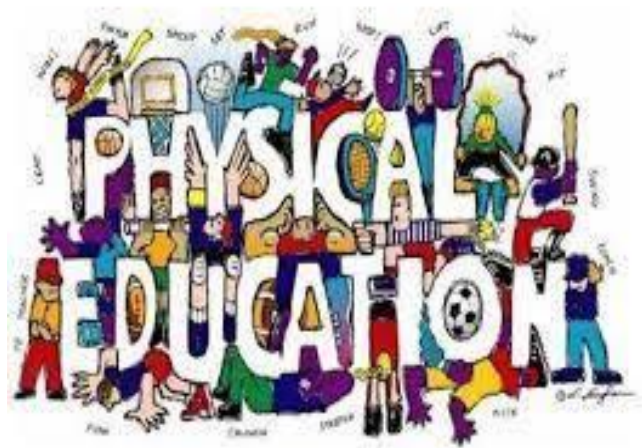
- research a topic of personal interest
- use digital technology to learn and to present their learning
- analyse information and draw personal conclusions and insights
- engage in learning beyond the classroom
- make plans, set goals and evaluate their progress in achieving their goals
- communicate clearly and effectively
- collaborate with others on tasks
- reflect on their learning.

Through these Classroom-Based Assessments students will develop their knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values, thereby achieving a range of learning outcomes across the strands.

G. Physical Education (PE)

Our Physical Education programme aims to promote a healthy, active lifestyle for our students both now and into their future. The Physical Education year is divided up into modules covering a variety of activities. We have three spaces, a sports hall, a new fitness suite and outdoor facilities with access to track and astro. We ensure a well-balanced curriculum to engage and motivate our students.

Some of the activities we offer are: general fitness, basketball, soccer, gymnastics, dance, badminton, table tennis, ultimate frisbee, rounders and athletics. The students do approximately 6 weeks of each activity every year. PE is a double class that occurs once a week. The emphasis in PE class is on participation and achieving ones best. The class is assessed based on participation, effort and improvement. Students must have the correct kit for PE as outlined in the uniform policy.



H. Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Civic, Social and Political Education is a subject offered within the wellbeing area for Junior Cycle. It aims to encourage students to think critically, inform them about the world and empower them to develop the skills needed to become active citizens.



The CSPE course is built around three strands:

Strand 1 Rights and Responsibilities: Students learn what it means to live with rights and responsibilities and examine the main human rights instruments that protect people’s rights.

Strand 2 Global Citizenship: students explore issues of poverty, inequality, and sustainable development and look to ways to bring about effective change.

Strand 3 Exploring Democracy: students examine how democracy works and the role of the media in a democracy.

I. Social, personal and health education (SPHE)

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is an important non-exam subject on the Junior Cycle curriculum. SPHE provides students with a unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others, and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development. The curriculum for SPHE is presented in ten modules, which are as follows:

- Belonging and integrating
- Self-Management : a sense of purpose
- Communication skills
- Physical health
- Friendship
- Relationships and sexuality
- Emotional health
- Influences and decisions
- Substance use
- Personal safety



Modern Foreign Languages

Students choose one modern foreign language – either French or German unless we have clear evidence of a language learning difficulty that recommends a student does not take a modern foreign language.

Students proficient in other languages will have an opportunity to take a Leaving Certificate examination in that language as an additional external subject where possible.

J. French

At Junior Cycle level, we aim to enable every student to be confident in a restaurant, ask for or give directions, understand signposts, posters and advertisements and to be able to correspond with a pen-pal describing various day to day events and situations.

The proper use of grammar, spelling, vocabulary and accent is continuously reinforced throughout the course.

The students are made aware of the culture, customs and traditions of France and the French people.

The Junior Cycle is composed of four language skills which will be examined: aural, oral, reading and writing. In Transition Year every student is offered the opportunity to participate in a school trip to France to experience the language and culture first hand. As a result of their experience of French, it is hoped that students will have:

- A good communicative ability in French.
- An awareness about language and communication.
- An awareness of French culture
- Skills required to further help them in the learning of French at Senior level.



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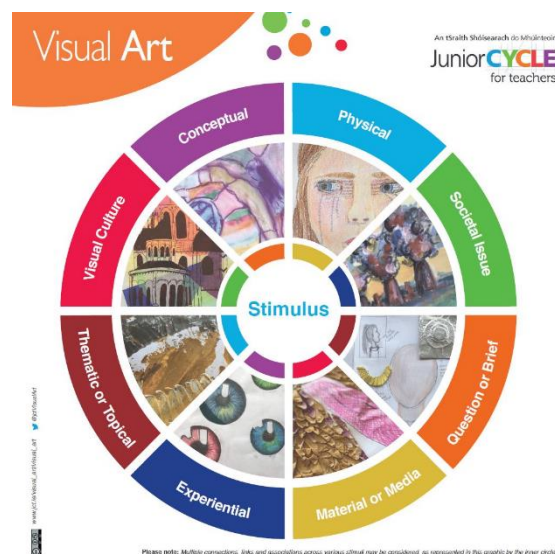
Students learn to read and understand German signs, notices, advertisements and be able to understand classroom language. Each student will learn to read journalistic texts and stories and be able to answer questions in both English and German. They write notes, postcards, messages and letters.

Students will also learn about life and culture in German speaking countries. In Transition Year students get the opportunity to participate in the German Exchange Programme. This involves hosting a German student in Ireland for two weeks and living in Germany for two weeks with a host family. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to improve their language skills and learn more about German life and culture on a first-hand basis.

L. Visual Art

Students will have the opportunity to design and develop work in a broad variety of media and material such as ceramics, sculpture, printing, pastels, paints, and textiles. The heart of this class is the development of the students own style and ideas through the use of their visual art sketchbook.

One of the highlights of the 3-year programme is our 2nd year gallery trip where students enjoy exploring Irish and international masterpieces first hand. Another benefit of the course is that our exam is undertaken during class time over a 12-week period in third year, there is no written exam in June.



M. Business Studies

The Business Studies course has a number of separate but related areas, all of which help the student to have a better understanding of the business world.

- **Personal Finance:** Making the most of your resources including Income, Expenditure and Budgets. Students look at financial planning for the future by saving and investing money, borrowing, taxation and investigating the financial services available to individuals and households. We examine the various types of Insurance available, the world of the consumer, the impact of consumer choices and how consumers are protected by law.
- **Enterprise:** Students will learn about the world of work, from being an entrepreneur through to their rights and responsibilities as employees. The roles of Digital Technology, Marketing and Financial Planning for organisations are also incorporated into the world of enterprise. Financial Accounts also feature as part of this strand.
- **Our Economy:** Examines our Economy, Government Economic Policy and the Economic Indicators that are used to determine the health of our Economy.



The Junior Cycle Business Studies course prepares the student for an option to do Senior Cycle business subjects, which are Business, Accountancy and Economics. The course is taught including two Classroom Based Assessments during second and third year. These are awarded descriptors on the student's profile of achievement.

N. Home Economics

Home Economics aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of healthy and sustainable living. Students will learn practical cookery and textile skills. The Junior Cycle Home Economics course is divided into three strands:



- **Food Health & Culinary Skills**– nutrition and food and its impact on health and wellbeing, dietetics, and cookery.
- **Responsible Family Living** – Students develop life skills in management of resources, effective decision making and become competent consumers.
- **Textiles and Craft** – Textile skills, knowledge and creativity including practical craftwork.

This subject helps students to prepare for life, life's decisions, life management and healthy living in a practical and enjoyable environment. Final assessment is 50% practical food skills exam and 50% written exam.

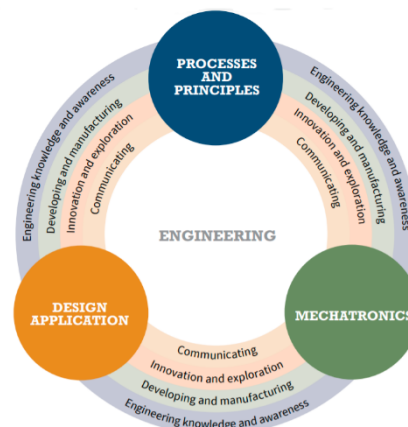
O. Engineering for Junior Cycle

The focus of Junior Cycle Engineering is goal-oriented problem solving for the manufacture of products, with emphasis on design, efficiency, accuracy, precision and a high- quality finish. This project-based approach to junior cycle Engineering requires students to develop a knowledge of materials and processes, and to demonstrate a capacity to select appropriate materials and processes for given applications.

The main aims of Junior Cycle Engineering:

- enable students to develop the disciplinary skills and knowledge to engineer an end product
- enable students to engage in goal-oriented problem solving, creating an awareness of engineering processes
- develop the necessary skills and apply engineering processes to manipulate material to manufacture a product with efficiency, accuracy, precision and a high-quality finish
- develop an engineering mind set through the exploration of contemporary engineering developments.

The assessment is a 70% design practical project and a 30% written theory paper.



P. Wood Technology

In Wood Technology students will explore the natural and made world through the medium of design, seeking out opportunities to creatively and innovatively apply the material/resource in making and shaping their environment.

The sustainable use of and management of this natural resource is important as the world faces the challenges of the 21st century.

There are two Classroom-Based Assessments in Wood Technology. They are assessed at a common level. Students will also complete a written examination of 90 minutes duration at the end of 3rd year.



Q. Music

The Junior Cycle Music course is designed to develop student's musicality through performing, composing and listening to music. It is designed to cater for students who have little or no previous knowledge of music as well for those with a more musical background.

Music education brings the young person to an awareness and appreciation of their own unique cultural environment and ethos. In engaging children with the rich background of their native musical traditions as well as other musical genres, music education contributes to the children's knowledge and understanding of others, their times, their cultures and traditions.



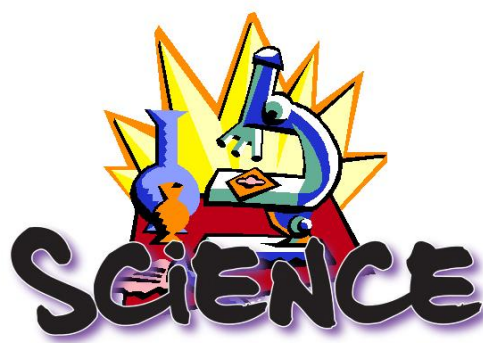
Students will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to produce and engage with authentic and original music, that is both theirs and the music of others. In doing so, they will develop the music literacy, critical skills and language necessary to engage with today's musical world.

Students who are talented at their instrument or singing can later take up to 50% of their Higher Level Leaving Certificate course in music as a performance element. The music classes partake in many trips to the National Concert Hall, concerts, musicals as well as partaking in school choir and ensembles, concerts and competitions.

R. Science

The Junior Cycle Science Specification has five major components, Nature of Science, Physical World, Earth and Space, Chemical World and Biological World.

This new course is activity based in its design and emphasizes practical experience of science. Through a variety of investigations and experiments students attain the specified learning outcomes, develop appropriate science process skills and acquire knowledge of underlying science concepts.



The Science course helps to develop skills such as problem solving, logical thinking, IT, research and interpreting data while developing a sense of enjoyment in the learning of science.

Students are encouraged to participate in competitions, for example the Young Scientist Competition and Scifest. Option subjects for Leaving Certificate include Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

S. Graphics

In Junior Cycle Graphics, students develop their creativity, spatial ability and capacity to reason and communicate ideas through engagement with abstract and applied geometric problem-solving activities.

Graphics encourages the development of the cognitive and practical dexterity skills associated with graphical communication

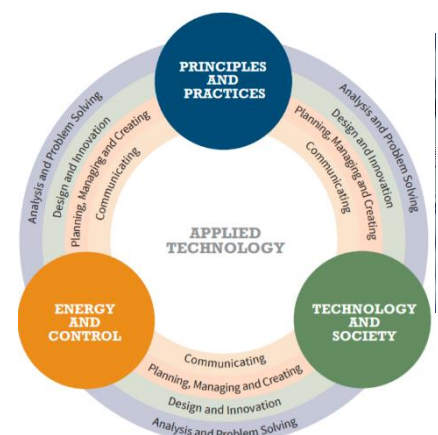
Students will build an appreciation of the role of graphics in the world around them and will make judgements on the best mode through which to represent their ideas and solutions.



T. Applied Technology

Applied Technology addresses the modifications of the natural world made to fulfil human needs or desire. This subject offers student an opportunity to view the role and impact of technology within their classroom, their community and the world. New technologies can impact on society and the environment. Students will analyse expected benefits and impacts as they make decisions about their design solutions, while considering the end user, the environmental impact and the functionality of their designs.

In the study of Applied Technology, students will have the opportunity to develop technological capability and literacy by engaging with a broad range of materials and systems. Students will develop an understanding of the principles of energy and control to resolve practical problems and will have the freedom to explore design and systems thinking.



The main aims of Applied Technology at junior cycle:

- enable students to develop the necessary conceptual understanding, disciplinary skills and subject knowledge to investigate and solve real-life problems
- promote the enjoyment of the study of the subject while developing a curiosity about the technological world
- develop the ability of students to generate and evolve their ideas through an iterative process and communicate through appropriate media
- develop students' resilience through constructive critique and support their learning in a 'safe failure' environment
- encourage a disposition of enquiry, innovation, creativity, and self-efficacy

The assessment is a 70% design practical project and a 30% written theory paper.

Advice regarding subject choice

When talking to your son/daughter about ranking subjects on the subject option form the following points may be helpful:

- Students should choose subjects that they think they will enjoy – talk to them about their visit to the Open Day (if you managed to attend one) and what they liked about particular subjects.
- It is helpful if students have an idea of their individual strengths and talents from primary school e.g. do they like problem solving, project work, practical activities, memorizing facts, communication, etc. Match the talents to the description of a subject to see if it is in line with the student's aptitudes.
- Students should try to take a broad range of subjects for the Junior Cycle to ensure that they have a good choice of potential career areas and areas for further study available to them.
- Talk to current and former students of the college to get a sense of what the different subjects are like and what project work or theoretical work is involved.
- Please consult the information available online about the effects on further education and career options if a student is not studying a modern foreign language.

Additional Information

Subject specifications for each of the subjects to be taught at Junior Cycle are available at

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/>

Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle, developed by the NCCA; available at <https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/wellbeing/>

More information on Junior Cycle assessment and reporting is available on the NCCA website at <https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/>

Information for parents of students with additional needs can be found here: <https://ncse.ie/for-parents-2>