

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS OF INCOMING FIRST YEARS

### **Will lockers be available for First Years?**

All First Years receive lockers, however this year, due to Covid 19 restrictions, no lockers are being used. Hopefully, lockers will be available next year.

### **Are there enough spaces for every child in their option of choice?**

We try to ensure that all students are placed in their chosen options. We provide more than one class if a subject is very popular. Usually the only circumstances where a student is not placed in their selected option class is when they don't fill in the option form on time and miss a place.

### **How many subjects do you pick in First year?**

Students study 10 subjects in total for their Junior Cycle.

### **Can options be changed at any point?**

When students are sampling their options, they can get a feel for the subjects and make an informed choice before making their final decision. Once an option is chosen, it cannot be changed due to resource issues and class sizes.

### **Does everyone do Irish?**

Yes, Irish is a compulsory subject in school. Some students may be exempt from Irish if they are diagnosed with a specific learning disability by an Educational Psychologist.

### **Do all first years go home for lunch?**

The majority of students go home for lunch. There is a lunch club in the community and in the school which some students avail of if they live too far away from the school.

## **What kind of supports are there if you need help?**

We provide many learning supports for the students. We have an SEN (Special Educational Needs) department which ensures students receive supports appropriate to their needs and also reasonable accommodations in exams if required. We use team teaching to target students with additional needs and also have SNAs in many classes. All First Year students do extra literacy classes and have access to further reading programmes in their library time.

We have a student support team, consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Counselling Department staff, Chaplain, Year Heads, HSCL teacher and Behaviour for Learning teacher. We use a team approach in the school and teachers, tutors and year heads work together to support the academic and emotional supports of the students.

## **Are Well-being classes offered?**

Yes, all JC students have wellbeing classes and activities on their timetable.

## **What is your anti-bullying policy?**

We have an anti-bullying policy, and bullying is not tolerated in the school. There are set procedures when a case of bullying is reported and we endeavour to resolve the situation with the best possible outcome.

## **How do you communicate with Parents/Guardians?**

All parents have access to an app called VSWare. This allows you to monitor your child's attendance and punctuality. You can also access a behaviour record where both positive and inappropriate behaviours are recorded. Every student has a class teacher (tutor) and a Year Head. They communicate with parents using VSware, phone calls and emails. Detailed reports

are sent home at Christmas and Summer. There are parent/teacher and tutor meetings for every year.

**Will it be noticed if students are falling behind or struggling socially?**

Yes, there is an excellent communication system in the school with a focus on the wellbeing of our students. Teachers and tutors communicate and monitor progress regularly. Class exams, attendance and homework are studied and issues will be brought to the attention of parents. This system is also backed up by the school student support team. Parents can access supports through the HSCL teacher. Parents are also asked to monitor their child's progress.

**Is there continuous assessment?**

A large component of the Junior Cycle is continuous assessment and throughout second and third year the students have class-room based assessments in their subjects. This has reduced the overall weighting of the Junior Cycle exams.

**What do you do if your child has extra medical needs?**

If your child has extra medical needs, let their tutor or Year head know. They will then inform other relevant staff members.