

Policy on Subject Selection, Requests for Subject Changes and Requests/Recommendations for Changes in Subject Levels

Policy on Changing Subjects for Junior Cycle

- Students and parents are furnished with detailed information on all subjects in the course of the First Year Open Night
- The Guidance Department present a “Subject Choice” Information Evening before the date of submission of final option choices
- Each student is given a Subject Choice Information Booklet, available also on the school website
- Students select from the following:
 - 1) MFL: French or German (Students with special educational needs will consult with the SEN co-ordinator in relation to the choice of MFL)
 - 2) Students can select 6 option subjects from a range of 9 for trial during the first term of 1st year. At the end of that trial period they select 3 Junior Cycle subjects to proceed with.
- This final selection is indicated on the school’s Subject Choice Form which is co-signed by students and parents and returned to the school on an agreed date.

Changing Subjects in the course of Junior Cycle

- The changing of subjects will only be considered in exceptional circumstances
- The subject change can only proceed if a place is available in another subject deemed suitable for the student
- A request to change subject will not be considered should a period of term time deemed too significant to allow the student successfully to integrate into the programme of learning, lapse. It is recommended that no more than a 3-week window be allowed for applications to present a request for a change of subject
- A significant deficit of teacher instruction and guidance may hamper a students’ ability to participate meaningfully and successfully in the subject they are switching to:
- In order to request a change of subject a student in consultation with and with the support of parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete the following steps:
 - Student/Parent informs the subject teacher as to their request for a subject change

- Parent informs the Year Head in writing as to what subject is requested to replace the current subject being undertaken. The reasons for the request should be explained clearly
- Parent/Student consult the school Guidance Counsellor(s) for information and advice on the implications of this subject change
- The Year Head consults the Principal regarding the request confirming that the process steps have been completed adequately
- The Principal is the final arbiter of the decision
- The Year Head informs the parents in writing as to the decision taken in response to the request

Senior Cycle

- Students are provided with information on Senior Cycle Programme and subject options during Subject Choice Options presentation
- Students are provided with a subject presentation by teachers of the Leaving Cert. subjects at Scoil Dara (3rd Yr and TY)
- Each student is provided with a Senior Cycle Subject Information Booklet.
- 3rd Year and TY students receive information from the co-ordinators of TY, LCA and LCVP outlining programme opportunities, subject choices and associated implications for Senior Cycle.
- Appointments with Guidance Counsellors are made available to students and Year Heads work closely with the Guidance Department to support student choice
- All Senior Cycle students will study Irish (unless exemption granted), a MFL (unless exemption granted) English and Maths.
- In the case of students with a language exemption - Irish, Scoil Dara will provide an obligatory subject, co-timetabled with Irish, of the school's choosing for inclusion in the senior cycle provision for these "exempt" students. The subject selected will depend on the resources available to the school
- Students are requested to select 3 option subjects through the following procedure:
 1. Students select in order of preference – 1 = most preferred choice – on each of the three option subject lines
 2. Every reasonable accommodation is given to students to ensure that they receive their first three preferences. Where this is not possible students may receive their second or third choice
 3. Students may have the option to select and qualify for LCVP dependent on the eligibility of the subjects they chose for the programme. Should a student accept a

- place on the LCVP programme they are expected to engage in this 2 year programme for its duration
4. Students subject choices and timetable will be recorded live on E-portal

Changing Subjects in the course of Senior Cycle

- The changing of subjects by a senior cycle student will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- The subject change can only proceed if a place is available in another subject deemed suitable for the student
- A significant deficit of teacher instruction and guidance may hamper a students' ability to participate meaningfully and successfully in the subject they are switching to
- Please note the decision to change subject must be taken within 3 weeks of returning to school and commencing the fifth-year academic cycle. A request to change subject will not be considered should a period of term time deemed too significant to allow the student successfully to integrate into the programme of learning, lapse
- The decision to apply for a subject change is taken in consultation with parents/guardians and the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for communicating this subject change request to the current subject teacher.

In order to request a change of subject a senior cycle student along with their parent/guardian must complete the following steps in consultation with school personnel:

A letter must be submitted to the relevant Year Head outlining the following:

- Current subject and subject teacher
 - Destination subject requested
 - Reasons for requested change
 - Date of application (within 3-week window)
 - Signature of student and parent(s)
 - Confirmation that discussions have taken place with the teacher of current subject
 - Signature of current subject teacher
- A discussion between the student and the Year Head will then take place and follow up consultation with the parent(s)/ guardian(s) is at the discretion of the Year Head.

- The Guidance and counselling team will advise of the appropriateness and feasibility of the subject change and may meet with the student to discuss the implications of the subject change in respect of further education course requirements etc.
- In consultation with the Year Head and following from the steps outlined above the Principal will approve/refuse the subject change request
- The Year Head will inform the Student Administrator of the outcome so that amendments can be made class rolls.
- The Year Head will inform the student (parents where deemed appropriate) of the outcome and the date on which the change (if approved) should take place
- The Year Head will inform the relevant teachers of the approved subject change
- The Principal is the final arbiter in this process

In the case of 6th Year students, the request to change subjects, will require the following steps:

1. A written request from the parents addressed to the Principal stating the nature of and reason for the subject change request
2. Parents/Guardians and the student concerned are advised to make contact with the Guidance Counselling team for information regarding the consequences and implications of the considered change
3. The change of subject will only be considered in the event that a place is available in another subject deemed suitable and agreeable to the student
4. The Principal, taking all of the above into consideration will make a determination and communicate in writing to the parents, outlining the reasons for the decision
5. There may be circumstances, such as the lack of availability of a of a place in a requested subject, which may result in the subject change being non-feasible
6. The Principal on behalf of the Board of Management is the final arbiter

Policy for Changing Subject Levels for Junior Cycle Subjects

Changing Subject Levels at Junior Cycle

Scoil Dara encourages all students to attempt and have the opportunity to take higher level at Junior Cycle

Students wishing to change levels must follow the following steps:

1. Student to consult with subject teacher prior requesting a change of subject level
2. Parents/Guardians to consult with subject teacher prior to applying for a change of subject level
3. Subject teachers may advise a student on the appropriateness of a change in subject level. This will be communicated to student and parents/guardians through term reports, class assessments, parent teacher meeting and/or by other means of communication and consultation in the course of the academic year.
4. Parent/Guardian communicates a request for subject level in writing to the subject teacher / Year Head . A copy of this letter is forwarded to the Deputy Principal
5. The subject level change can only proceed if a place is available in a class at the requested subject level is available and deemed suitable for the student
6. In mixed level classes the student will be facilitated in their examination preparation at the appropriate and agreed level
The change of level will be recorded on the E8A form
7. Once the E8A form has been submitted to the State Examination Commission, a Junior Cycle student is not permitted to change level. In the event of exceptional circumstances and by written request to the Deputy Principal, a parent/guardian may make a case for their son/daughter to change level for the Junior Cycle exam. Following this consultation with the Deputy Principal, a letter may be issued to the invigilator of the State Examination centre requesting that this exam candidate be permitted to sit the specific exam subject at the requested level subject to the availability of a paper at that level on the day of the examination

Please note: Scoil Dara has no mandate with regard the exam centres or the actions of the invigilators

Changing Subject Levels at Senior Cycle

- Scoil Dara encourages students to study at higher level in Senior Cycle

Changing Subject Levels at Senior Cycle - Option Subjects

Students wishing to change subject levels must complete the following steps:

1. Student to consult with subject teacher prior requesting a change of subject level
2. Parents/Guardians to consult with subject teacher prior to applying for a change of subject level
3. Parents/Guardians and students are advised as to the possible implications of said proposed change (entry requirements for further education courses)
4. Student consults with Guidance Counsellors regarding possible implications of change of levels
5. Subject teachers may advise a student on the appropriateness of a change in subject level. This will be communicated to student and parents/guardians through term reports, class assessments, parent teacher meeting and/or by other means of communication and consultation in the course of the academic year. Particular attention should be addressed to the mock exam results in 6th year and in particular recommendations from subject teachers regarding advised levels for the Leaving Certificate examinations
6. Parents/Guardians inform the subject teacher/ Year Head of their final decision regarding subject level in writing. A copy of this should be forwarded to the Deputy Principal. All efforts are made to accommodate the student at that subject level
7. The subject level change can only proceed if a place is available in a class at the appropriate and agreed level, deemed suitable for the student
8. In mixed level classes the student will be facilitated in their examination preparation at the appropriate and agreed level
9. Where no class place is available at that subject level the student will be facilitated in the study of the agreed subject level in their current class group
10. The State Exams Commission allow Senior Cycle student to change subject level on the day of the exam.

Changing Subject level in Senior Cycle – Irish, English and Maths

Guidelines across the three departments - Irish English and Maths – recommend that in order to be deemed eligible to progress to senior cycle higher level in these subjects' students must attain a C grade at Junior Cert or an equivalent Merit in Junior Cycle.

Students wishing to undertake any subject at higher level in Senior Cycle are recommended to have attained a C or equivalent merit award at Junior Cycle higher level in that subject.

This recommendation can be reviewed in exceptional circumstances such as where a student attained consistently high standard in assessments throughout their 3rd year or Transition Year or where their subject teacher recommends them for an opportunity at Senior Cycle higher level in that teacher's subject.

Each subject department will refer to and be guided by their agreed policy on assigning and recommending levels to students at Junior and Senior Cycle