

Meánscoil na mBráithre Críostaí, Cill Chainnigh
Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.

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SUBJECT CHOICE POLICY Jan 2020

School Name:	Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
School Address:	James's Street, Kilkenny
School Details:	CBS Kilkenny is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.
School Management:	The Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement

Inspired by its founder, CBS Kilkenny aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Kilkenny seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values.
- Promoting partnership in the school community.
- Excelling in teaching and learning.
- Creating a caring school community.
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

Aims of Policy

1. To work towards achieving the mission statement of our school
2. To meet requirements of the 1998 Education Act to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.

Objectives of Policy

1. To identify and support students who will be requested to make subject choices
2. To inform all the partners in the school of the procedures involved in subject choice at CBS Kilkenny
3. To ensure a transparent policy by identifying the challenges that may arise within subject choice.

This policy applies to:

1. Incoming 1st Year students
2. Entrants to 5th Year from Transition Year and from 3rd Year.

Important Notes:

- Due to timetabling restraints, it is not possible to facilitate students who are exempt from Irish or European languages to take an alternative subject
- At Junior Cycle, all students must opt for a European language, unless the student has been formally exempted
- At Senior Cycle, students are not obliged to opt for a European language, although it is advised
- All aspects of the subjects on offer are discussed at Information Evenings throughout the academic year. Parents are advised to attend these events because subject choice is demand and resource dependent and changes from year to year.

Subject Choices

- Incoming 1st Years Choice of languages.
Students choose one out of six subjects (including Business) for the Junior Cycle.
Optional subject taster system during the first week of the academic year.
- Entrants to 5th Year
Choice of four subjects for Leaving Certificate from those available.

Who is Responsible?

The ultimate decision and responsibility for subject choice rests with the principal and the Board of Management of the CBS Kilkenny.

Procedures for entrants to 1st Year

1. In the case of incoming 1st Year students, parents/guardians are informed in writing about:
 - subject choice
 - Information Evening for parents/guardians on subject choice regarding the subject content and assessment methods for Junior Cycle. Links to Leaving Certificate subjects are highlighted
 - the procedure for selection of their preference on the appropriate form
 - the deadline for submitting such forms.
2. Parents/Guardians or students requiring further information subsequent to the Information Evening, may make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor, at a mutually convenient time for all parties.
3. The school makes every effort to accommodate student preferences. Where it is not possible to do so, or where parents/guardians or students are dissatisfied with the choices being offered to them, the following options are available:
 - An appointment may be set up with the student and/or their parents/guardians to discuss the matter
 - Alternative choices may be proposed with reference to career implications
 - Subject to availability, suitable alternatives may then be selected by the student and ratified by the parents/guardians.

Procedures for entrants from TY to 5th Year

The process of choosing subjects should be informed by results of the Differential Aptitude Tests (DATS), career interest inventory results and personality test results completed in the first term of Transition Year.

On return to school early in January, Transition Year students undertake a module on subject choice as part of the guidance programme.

When making subject choice, students should consider the following:

- The subjects they are good at
- The subjects they like and have an interest in
- The minimum entry requirement for colleges and courses.

They are given information on:

- The list of subjects available to choose from
- The entry requirements for 3rd level colleges and other career areas
- The essential subjects for particular courses
- The general relevance of subjects to all career areas.

Teachers of Leaving Certificate subjects also give a presentation on their subject area so that students are informed about:

- Subject content
- Assessment of the subject
- Allocation of marks for assignments or project work for the Leaving Certificate Exam in that subject.

A letter is sent home to parents/guardians to inform them of the Information Evening regarding subject choice.

A date is given to parents/guardians and students by which subject choice forms must be returned.

Parents/Guardians and/or students are welcome to request a one to one appointment with the Guidance Counsellor regarding subject choice, dependent on the availability of the Guidance Counsellor.

- A process begins whereby four bands of subjects are drawn up in consultation with students and parents/guardians, until an optimal fit is found within the school context.
- In the context of wellbeing, any difficulties that arise in accommodating student preferences are discussed with students, parents/guardians and the school principal.
- Alternative choices are proposed with reference to career implications so that student wellbeing is maintained.
- Suitable alternatives are selected by students and ratified by the parents/guardians in all cases subject to availability.
- Subject choices to be completed before the February midterm break.

GDPR

- Application forms for subject choice and change of options are stored securely in the Guidance Counsellor's office.
- All forms are signed by parents/guardians.

Procedure for entrants from 3rd Year to 5th Year

Third year students are visited by the TY Coordinator and are given details on the TY programme, its content, experiences and value to their education.

Parents/Guardians of all Third Year students are informed by letter, of a Parents /Guardians Information Evening on:

1. Joining the TY Programme.
- or
2. Proceeding directly to 5th Year.

Parents are given a date by which to return an initial preference form. This form identifies those students who will proceed directly to 5th Year.

This group of students is gathered together for six lessons on subject choice for Leaving Certificate. The same procedure is followed as that which applies for TY students going on to 5th Year.

Subject Change of Mind in 5th Year

- No changes in subject choice are permitted after 30th September on entering 5th Year.
- Changes prior to 30th September can only be facilitated subject to class size, timetabling restrictions and parental/guardian consent.

The following procedures are in place for students where change of subject choice can be facilitated:

- Students and/or parents/guardians arrange a consultation with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Request in writing from parents/guardians must be submitted to the Guidance Counsellor.
- Request is discussed with principal, Guidance Counsellor and the relevant teachers. Change is permitted when all concerned are in agreement and when the change of option form is fully completed

Over-Subscription of Subjects

- If subjects are oversubscribed, student application to study and completion of project work during Junior Cycle may be taken into account.

Approval

This policy has been approved by CBS Kilkenny Board of Management.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____