

# Meánscoil na mBráithre Criostaií, Cill Chainnigh

**Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.**

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## SUBJECT CHOICE POLICY Mar 2024

**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 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.

Please note that the term *parents* is used to describe legal guardians also.

### **Child protection**

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with CBS Kilkenny Child Safeguarding Statement and in line with the Children First Act 2015 (and Addendum 2019) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools - revised 2023.

### **Wellbeing**

While renewing this policy, due consideration has been given to all aspects of the wellbeing of students at CBS Kilkenny and particularly to the Wellbeing School Improvement Plan (May 2018).

### **GDPR**

General Data Protection Regulation came into force in May 2018, and this policy has been reviewed in accordance with best practice as detailed in this legislation.

## **Aims of Policy**

1. To work towards achieving the mission statement of our school.
2. To meet the requirements of the 1998 Education Act to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.
3. This Subject Choice Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for subject selection at CBS Kilkenny, a secondary school committed to providing a well-rounded education that meets the needs and aspirations of our students. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students make informed decisions about their subject choices and are supported in achieving their academic and career goals.

## **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.
4. To provide a wide range of subjects to cater to diverse interests and career aspirations.
5. To help students make informed choices based on their abilities, interests, and future career goals.
6. To facilitate a smooth transition from one academic level to another, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for further education or the workforce.
7. To promote fairness and equity in subject allocation.

## **This policy applies to:**

1. Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students.
2. Entrants into 5<sup>th</sup> Year from Transition Year or 3<sup>rd</sup> Year.

### **Important Notes:**

- Due to timetabling and resource 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. However, students are made aware of the implications of not doing a European language for third level options.
- 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 1<sup>st</sup> Year students:
  - Choice of languages.
  - Students choose two of six subjects for the Junior Cycle.
  - .
- Entrants to 5th Year:
  - Choice of four option subjects for Leaving Certificate from those available.
  - Students may also avail of an additional eight subject.

## 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 into 1<sup>st</sup> Year

1. In the case of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students, parents are informed of:
  - Subject choice.
  - Information Evening for parents 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 or students requiring further information subsequent to the Information Evening, may make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor at a mutually convenient time.
3. The school makes every effort to accommodate student preferences. Where it is not possible to do so, or where parents 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 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.

## Procedures for entrants from TY into 5<sup>th</sup> Year

The process of choosing subjects will be informed by student engagement with a variety of guidance related resources.

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 are available to provide information 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.

Parents are informed of the Information Evening regarding subject choice.

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

Parents 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, 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 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 in all cases subject to availability.

## **Procedure for entrants from 3<sup>rd</sup> Year into 5<sup>th</sup> Year**

3<sup>rd</sup> 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 of all Third Year students are informed of a Parents Information Evening on:

1. Joining the TY Programme.  
or
2. Proceeding directly to 5<sup>th</sup> Year.

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

### **Subject Change of Mind in 5<sup>th</sup> Year**

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

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

- Students and/or parents arrange a consultation with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Request from parents must be submitted to the Guidance Counsellor.
- Request is discussed with year head 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.

### **GDPR**

- Application forms for subject choice and change of options are stored securely by the Guidance Counsellors.
- All forms are signed by parents.

## **Approval**

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

Signed:

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Chairperson, Board of Management

Date:

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