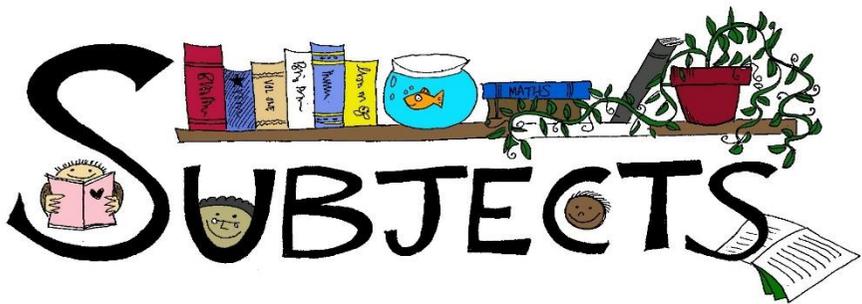


Davitt College

Castlebar,

Co. Mayo

Guide to 1st Year Subject Choices



The New Junior Cycle

All students are now taking part in the new Junior Cycle. It features revised subjects and short courses, a focus on key skills, and new approaches to assessment and reporting. It has introduced a range of 8 skills and 24 statements of learning that must be on offer to students over the course of Junior Cycle. Davitt College ensures that all of these are met over the duration of the first three years in the school.

What is new in the Junior Cycle?

1. Subject courses have been shortened to allow more experimental and activity-based learning so that students gain skills as well as knowledge.
2. Subjects have an 'Assessment Task' (AT) which is completed in school prior to the Junior Certificate exam. This allows students to gain marks (up to 10%) before the final exam.
3. A new Certificate has been introduced called the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement or JCPA.
4. Class based assessments or CBAs are completed in class and graded by teachers. e.g., a student makes a short presentation to a class group. Grades are recorded on the JCPA
5. Short courses have been introduced. These are not examined in the final exam but will be assessed over the three years and will also appear on the Profile of Achievement. Short courses can be taken in subjects that students study e.g. PE, CSPE and Digital Media etc.
6. Wellbeing has been introduced as a subject. This comprises of three key subjects CSPE, SPHE and PE as well as additional activities.

[Please click here for further information on the Junior Cycle](#)

Subjects at Junior Cycle

There are three different categories of subjects in Junior Cycle,

1. Core Exam Subjects (required by everyone)

1. Irish*
2. English
3. Maths
4. Science
5. History
6. Geography
7. French or German (Modern Foreign Language)

*Those with formal exemptions attend Learning Support

2. Core Non-Exam Subjects**

1. Digital Media Literacy (Computer Studies) *Offered in 1st year only
2. Social, Personal & Health Education (S.P.H.E.)
3. Civic, Social & Political Education (C.S.P.E.)
4. Physical Education (P.E.)

These Three Subjects form the Wellbeing Programme

** These courses are not examined at Junior Cycle but students' complete assignments over the three years and successful completion of the courses is formally recognised on the new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement Certificate.

3. Optional Subjects

1. Engineering
2. Wood Technology
3. Graphics
4. Music
5. Visual Art
6. Home Economics
7. Business Studies

Choosing Subjects—Factors to be considered

1. Flexibility

The first factor to be taken into consideration is that optional subjects can be changed. On VSware you are indicating **your preference** for subjects. You should give serious consideration to what subjects you wish to study but we also understand that in September you may find that a subject is not what you thought and there will be flexibility to change for the first 6-8 weeks.

2. Interests

What do I like? If you like something, you are more likely to work at it and enjoy it. Therefore, choose the subjects you like or think you will like. There is no point choosing a subject because you believe it will get you a job or because you believe it is easy. Similarly, there is no point avoiding a subject just because you heard somewhere that it will be difficult. Remember, what one person considers easy, another considers difficult and vice versa!

3. Be open to new subjects

Do not be afraid to try a new subject if you feel you would like it. Just because you have never tried it before does not mean you won't like it. In fact, you may love it and be very good at it.

4. Ability/Aptitude:

What am I good at? Look at your strengths and the things you enjoy. Ask yourself the following questions: Are you interested in reading? Do you enjoy writing? Do you like working with wood? Are you familiar with metalwork already? Are you musical? Do you enjoy sewing, cooking etc.? Do you like learning languages? Do languages come easy to you? Are you good at Art? Are you artistically minded? Ask yourself *'What am I good at?'*

5. Future Career

It is very difficult to decide what career a person would like at 12 years of age. However, many 12-year-olds know what they do not like. No one wants to end up working in a job doing something they do not like. Once you know what you do not like, the key is to keep your options open.

6. A Modern Foreign Language

If you intend to go to University, it is very important to note that many of the Universities in Ireland require one modern foreign language for entry to some of their courses. This is changing slowly but it is something to keep in mind. Please see more information on language requirements below.

The above six factors need to be considered when choosing subjects. Remember that at the end of 3rd Year you will be choosing Leaving Certificate subjects which will give you a chance to start again.

If you are still unsure as to what to choose, please contact the school on 094 9023060 and make an appointment to meet the Guidance Counsellor or a specific subject teacher

Modern Foreign Languages

A modern foreign language is an entry requirement for 4 of the 7 main universities. All the National University of Ireland Colleges i.e., NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth, UCC, UCD, RCSI, ST. Angela's Sligo and NCAD require a modern foreign language for most of their courses. Exceptions to this rule at present are: Engineering, Science & Nursing. A modern language is also required for cadetship in the army. UL, DCU & TCD have less strict requirements on the modern language requirement.

The modern foreign languages currently on offer at Davitt College are French and German. Please read overleaf for further details.

Please note that the study of a Modern Foreign Language is compulsory for all students and each student must select it on one of the option lines.

Your subject choice is not complete without the selection of at least one Modern Foreign Language and to fail to select one may result in a student not obtaining their subject choice

[Please click here for more information on Junior Cycle Subjects](#)

French



French students will learn and become competent in the French language as well as becoming familiar with the culture.

What will I study?

The emphasis is on the 4 key skills:

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking

Examination: A combination of a written exam and class-based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Specific careers in which French is of benefit include: Teaching; Translation; Interpreting; Linguistics; Localisation; Tourism; Journalism and Media among others.

German



German students will learn and become competent in the German language as well as becoming familiar with the culture.

What will I study?

The emphasis is on the 4 key skills:

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking

Examination: A combination of a written exam and class-based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Specific careers in which German is of benefit include: Teaching; Translation; Interpreting; Linguistics; Localisation; Tourism; Journalism and Media among others.

Geography



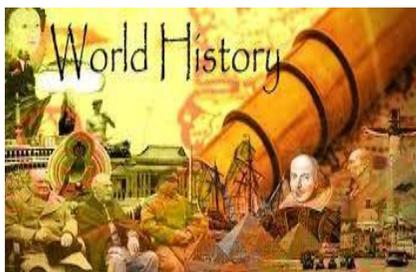
Geography is the study of people and their relationships with their environment. It is concerned with helping to develop an understanding of the physical, social, and economic processes which shape the environment. It is a subject that will benefit students throughout their lives and it awakens an interest and understanding of everything happening around us.

What will I study?

1. Physical Geography – Earthquakes/volcanoes, rivers, seas, etc.
2. Social Geography – People and how they interact with the world.
3. Economic Activity – How we make money using the world around us.

Examination: A combination of a written exam and class-based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Town planning, Teaching, Engineering and Environmental Sustainability & Studies.



History

The study of history is about exploring human experience over time and how that experience has shaped the world we live in today. The focus is very much on the lives of ordinary people throughout History as outlined below.

What will I study?

- Ancient civilisations e.g., Stone Age
- Medieval society and renaissance.
- Studies of Change: exploration, reformation, growth of industry
- Modern Ireland: 20th century, international relations.

Examination: A combination of a written exam and class-based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Local Government, Law, Media, Archaeology, Museum Work, Librarian, Civil Service.

Optional Subjects

Wood Technology



In Wood Technology students learn to design small projects and the skills required to use tools and equipment to make your designs.

What will I study?

Main sections:

- Examine trees and the environment
- Sketching
- Design Project
- Practical work –completing projects

Examinations: A combination of a written exam, a practical project and class based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Sustainable Energy Consultant, Civil Engineering, MechanicalEngineering, Construction Management, Architecture, Quantity Surveyor, Site Foremen, Plumber, Carpenter, Joinery

Engineering



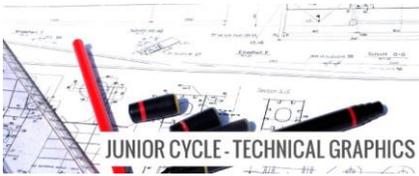
In Engineering, you will learn how to work with metals and assemble different parts. Plastics and wood are also investigated.

What will I study?

- How to examine properties of metal/wood/plastics
- How to examine how things work
- Freehand sketching
- Creating and assembling projects
- Basic electronic components

Examination: A combination of a written exam, a practical project and class based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Engineering is useful for the following careers: mechanic, panel beater, welder, plumber, electronic and mechanical engineering, architecture, aircraft technician, army/air corps and industrial design



Graphics

In Graphics you will learn how to represent 3-D objects on paper and on computer.

What will I study?

- How to do drawings of everyday items
- 3D Visualisation
- Architectural drawing
- Sketching, colouring, and shading of objects
- Cardboard / paper models of items

Examination: A combination of a written exam, and class based assessments over the three years

Possible Careers/Courses: Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Construction Management, Architecture, Product Design, Quantity Surveyor, Draughtsman, Graphic Design and Teaching.

Visual Art



This subject involves becoming familiar with and applying the elements of art and the principles of design, and the knowledge and skills associated with these processes.

What will I study?

It involves practical work

- Design
- Drawing
- Painting
- Working with clay, etc.
- Computer work
- Advertising

Examination: combination of a written exam and class-based assessment over the three years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Art is useful for careers in animation, art teaching, computer design, architecture, fashion design, interior design, graphic design, painting and decorating, photography and art therapy.

Music



Junior Certificate Music can help students to sing and perhaps learn to play an instrument. You will listen to and study many genres of music such as pop, classical and traditional Irish music. You will also start composing.

What will I study?

- Learn about many types of music
- How to read and write music
- How to sing songs
- Play an instrument.
- Participate in musical performances

Examination: Variety of practical and theory based assessment methods combined with class based assessments over the 3 years.

Possible Careers/Courses: Music is useful for media work or studies, primary teaching, sound engineering, public relations, library work, speech therapy, film, physical education, communications, production, performance and music at third level.

Home Economics



This is about equipping young people with certain important skills for living as individuals and for establishing and developing a stable environment for their families.

What will I study?

- 1) Food Studies/Culinary skills
- 2) Consumer Studies
- 3) Social and Health Studies
- 4) Resource management
- 5) Textiles Skills

Examination: 50% practical (cooking), 50% written. Class based assessments are based on Craftwork.

Possible Careers/Courses: This subject provides a good foundation for careers in a wide range of areas including Health, Nutrition, Education, Tourism, Textiles, Design, the Food industry, Science and Social Studies.

Business Studies



The new Business Studies curriculum aims to stimulate your interest in the business environment and how you interact with it. It develops skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that allow you to make informed and responsible decisions with all of the resources available to you, ensuring your own, and society's well-being, while becoming more self-aware as a learner.

What will I study?

The following three strands:

Personal Finance - In this strand, you will learn about managing your finances, responsible consumer behaviour and the value of using resources ethically and efficiently for the benefit of individuals and society.

Enterprise - In this strand, you will learn about being enterprising, the functions of an organisation and the business environment.

Our Economy - In this strand, you will learn about the demand and supply of goods and services, the role of the government in managing the economy, and about economic issues such as trade, employment and Ireland's membership of the European Union (EU)

Examination: A combination of a written exam and class-based assessments over the three years.

Possible Careers / Courses:

Business is useful for careers in a wide range of areas including Banking, Finance, Administration, Law, Insurance, Management and Marketing among others.

Frequently asked Questions

If I do not like a subject in September, can I change?

Yes, numbers permitting, but we suggest that you change within the first 4 weeks. This will give you a chance to experience one subject while at the same time not missing too much from another. Please note that any changes are subject to number of places available in any class.

If I did not do a subject at Junior Cycle, can I take it up at Senior Cycle?

There is no simple answer to this.

In the case of some subjects, the answer is *yes*. You will be at a disadvantage compared to the other students, but with extra effort by an interested student, some subjects are very achievable.

In the case of other subjects, the answer is less clear-cut. It very much depends on a student's personal aptitudes and skills. For example, someone with a flair for/prior knowledge of Art, Music, Metal Work or Woodwork but did not choose the subject in Junior Cycle may be comfortably able to take it on at Leaving Certificate.

In the case of some other subjects, the answer is probably *no*. For example, it would be very difficult to pick up German or French in Leaving Certificate having never studied it before.

What do Junior Certificate Subjects Lead to at Leaving Certificate?

Junior Certificate	Leaving Certificate
Irish	Irish
English	English
Maths	Maths
<i>The subjects below translate directly into Leaving Certificate subjects.</i>	
History	History
Geography	Geography
French	French
German	German
Music	Music
Art	Art
Engineering	Engineering
<i>The following subjects change name but essentially remain the same, building on what has been learned in Junior Cycle</i>	
Home Economics	Home Economics (S&S)
Graphics	Design and Communications Graphics (DCG)
Wood Technology	Construction Studies
<i>The following subject divide into various subjects allowing students to specialise</i>	
Business	Business Studies
	Accounting
	Economics
Science	Biology
	Chemistry
	Physics
	Agricultural Science

