



How will progress in learning be reported?

There will be regular reporting during junior cycle to keep you informed of your child's progress. At the end of junior cycle, your child will receive a **School Certificate** and a **School Report**.

The **School Certificate** will be awarded to a student in 8-10 subjects. Students may substitute 2 short courses for 1 subject for certification, up to a maximum of 4 short courses. Assessment for the certificate will take place during second and third year, as well as at the end of third year. A School Certificate may also be awarded at National Framework of Qualifications Level 2, to students with learning disabilities who have completed a learning programme based on PLUs and other components.

The **School Report** will include information on subjects, short courses and other learning experiences which are not for the purposes of certification. Other features of school life such as attendance, and personal and social development will also be reported.

Will the new junior cycle cater for the needs of all students?

Yes, it will. Schools will have the flexibility to plan their junior cycles to meet the needs of all students including those who have general learning disabilities and the exceptionally able. Schools can plan for learning so that all students are challenged and rewarded according to their abilities and interests.

What can I do to help?

continue to be supportive

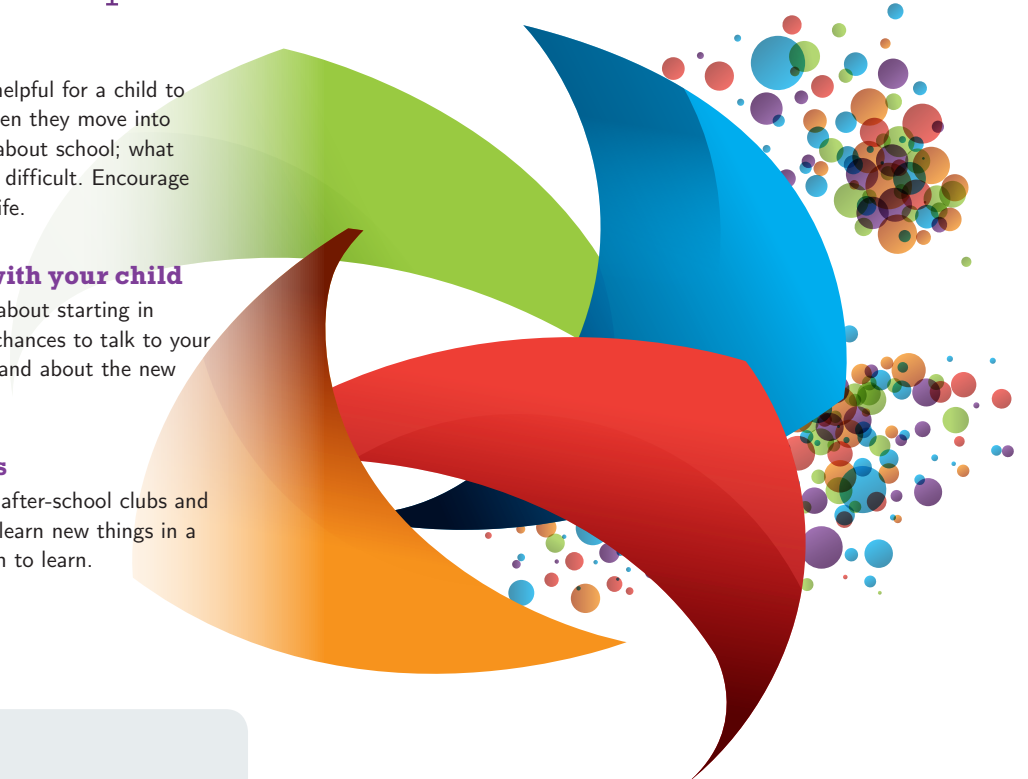
Just as in primary school, it is very helpful for a child to talk about what they are learning when they move into post-primary school. Ask your child about school; what they are enjoying and what they find difficult. Encourage them to get fully involved in school life.

talk about these changes with your child

Your child will have many questions about starting in post-primary school. Watch out for chances to talk to your child about starting in a new school and about the new junior cycle.

other learning experiences

Encourage your child to take part in after-school clubs and activities. These can help your child learn new things in a fun way and increase their motivation to learn.



Find out more

Get more information about the new junior cycle at www.juniorycycle.ie. Your child's post-primary school will have further information on the junior cycle and about their plans for the new junior cycle.

The junior cycle is changing...

The junior cycle that spans the first three years of post-primary school is changing. The new curriculum, that is designed to better prepare your child for life and future learning, will be introduced from September 2014.

This leaflet contains some useful information about the new junior cycle. For more information, go to www.juniorcycle.ie

How will the junior cycle be different in the future?

what will students learn?

Key skills: The changes will ensure that your child continues to develop key literacy and numeracy skills as well learning how to manage information, how to think critically, how to work with others and how to manage themselves. Other skills will include fostering creativity, the ability to communicate effectively and staying well.

Subjects: English will be the first of the revised subjects to be introduced in schools in September 2014. All other subjects will be revised and introduced on a phased basis.

Short courses: One of the innovations will include offering students the choice to participate in short courses as part of the junior cycle. Short courses could include courses in Digital Media Literacy, Artistic Performance, or Programming and Coding.

Other learning experiences: Schools will provide other experiences that are important parts of junior cycle learning, for example public speaking, Green Flag and musicals. These learning experiences will be recognised on the School Report your child receives at the end of junior cycle.

Priority learning units (PLUs): These are designed to meet the learning needs of a small number of students with learning disabilities. PLUs focus on the life skills of Communicating and literacy, Numeracy, Personal care, Living in a community and Preparing for work.

how students learn

Learning and teaching: Your child will be taking more responsibility for themselves and their own learning. In class, they will be working with others, working on their own and researching and presenting work in a variety of ways.

Assessment: As learning will be different, assessment will be different too. Your child will be able to demonstrate their learning in many different ways as they move through junior cycle. In general, 40% of the overall marks for subjects will be for work undertaken by students in second and third year.

The purpose of assessment is to get a better picture of the learning taking place throughout junior cycle. This will give your child clear feedback about how they can improve and help the teacher to plan further learning. The remaining 60% of the overall marks are awarded for a final assessment at the end of third year.

quality

Where assessment is for certification, particular safeguards are required to guarantee fairness to all young people and to provide confidence to parents/guardians.

In the new junior cycle, all students' work will be graded fairly against agreed features of quality. Teachers and principals will be provided with training and other supports to ensure this fairness. The State Examinations Commission will continue to provide support for the examinations. Time will also be provided for teachers to work together to arrive at a shared understanding of standards of student work, before they assign grades to student work.

Assessment results will be monitored and reviewed by the Department of Education and Skills, along with the results of standardised testing in reading, mathematics and science which will have taken place in second year.