

ATHBOY

COMMUNITY SCHOOL



WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL

ATHBOY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide quality, holistic and inclusive education for the community. Our aim is to create a safe and caring environment, which encourages pupils to reach their full potential in an atmosphere of mutual respect

The staff of Athboy Community School are actively involved in the promotion of sporting, cultural and other extra-curricular activities among the pupils. This compliments the work of the many sporting and cultural organisations in the area and ensures the overall development of all the talents of our pupils.

“Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí”.

OUR HISTORY

Athboy Community School was formed by the amalgamation of St. James' Vocational School and St. Joseph's Secondary School in 2004. We moved into our fabulous new campus in 2011.

The building was officially open by President Michael D. Higgins on 16th March 2012.



W

*Where words leave off,
music begins.*

Heinrich Heine



N ever stop learning
Because life never stops teaching

JUNIOR CYCLE PROSPECTUS ATHBOY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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Welcome
to our
Prospectus



W

elcome to our School!

In Athboy Community School, we offer our students the opportunity to belong to a caring community of students, staff and parents who work together to ensure that everyone feels like they belong and that they are important.

We recognise that our students are all unique, that they learn in different ways and shine in many varied areas of life. We understand that our job is to find their strengths and to build on them while supporting students in areas where they struggle.

CARE

In ACS, we believe that relationships are key to learning and to promoting happiness and resilience in our students. We go out of our way to find ways through extracurricular activities and additional areas of learning to build strong relationships and to promote our students' wellbeing above all else.

In September 2024, Class Tutors will be in place to look after each class. They meet students every morning in tutorial and also teach SPHE, CSPE and their own subject to their class. They provide support and advice.

Year Heads are in place to challenge students to do their best academically and socially.

Our Care Team meet every week to focus on students' mental health and wellbeing. The Care Team has a Guidance Counsellor, a Chaplain, a School Psychotherapist and a Additional Needs Coordinator as well as the principal and deputy principal.

We have a Meitheal Programme in which every student nominates one adult in the school to be their special contact in good times and bad.

Our 2nd Year Junior Mentors help 1st years with friendly advice about finding their way around school and how to get help if needed. Our Transition Year Senior Mentors help organise activities for younger students. Our 6th Year prefects help to run the school and are excellent role models for all of our students.



CURRICULUM

We offer a broad curriculum including the most up to date subjects at both Junior and Senior Cycle including Digital Media Studies, Coding, Artistic Performance, Robotics, Computer Science, Agricultural Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education. We work hard to ensure that students choose subjects in which they will excel and enjoy. We assess students using the digital CAT test before 1st year begins and later in 3rd year to provide information on the things students are good at. We track students' progress throughout the three semesters each year. We set house exams and classroom based assessments at the end of Semesters 1 and 3. Throughout Semester 2 students undergo continuous assessment which gives students a chance to show learning through speeches, presentations, artistic displays, digital media and in many other ways.

WELLBEING

We have a very innovative and proactive Additional Needs Department which is structured to ensure that highly skilled teachers are assigned to work with students across every year group who are exceptionally able or who need extra support in one or all subjects. The SEN Dept liaises with all staff to share necessary information to support the best quality teaching for all students.

We have extra staff on hand to support students wellbeing and across all aspects of their development. We have An Cuan for students with Autism and operate a Nurture Classroom for students who have experienced trauma in their lives (see page 36/7).

We ask all students to get involved in activities outside of classes so they can get to know teachers and other students outside of the classroom setting. These activities vary every year and include various sports, Music, Coding, Board Games, Art, Cookery, Linguistics, Maths Club, Lego Robotics, Animation, Debating and more.

Where are our Past Pupils Now?

Mikaela Bautista - **LAW** - Maynooth University MH502 - Level 8

Sean Cox - **ARTS** - Maynooth University - MH101 - Level 8

Michael Dunphy - **ACCOUNTING & FINANCE** - Maynooth University - MH403 - Level 8

Emma Fanning - **ARTS** - Galway University - GY101 - Level 8

Liam Kelleher - **COMMERCE** - Galway University - GY201 - Level 8

Amy Kelly - **COMMUNICATION STUDIES** - DCU - DC131 - Level 8

Ainetas Zubrickas - **MARKETING** - DCU - DC240 - Level 8

Roisin Heaney - **VETERINARY NURSING** - DK784 - Level 7



Celebrating entrepreneurial past pupil Una Leonard

2210 PATISSERIE

Una Leonard is a past pupil of Athboy Community School and is one of our success stories.

Despite facing deep depression at the age of 18, she began to bake at home and found glimpses of light in the darkness through baking and creating recipes. She is famous for her Mullingar bakery, 2210 Patisserie and has published a book called "Sweet Therapy" in which she shares recipes for her famous brownies, blondies and cookies. 2210patisserie.ie

UNA'S THOUGHTS ON HER TIME IN ATHBOY CS:

“ This is actually going to sound cheesy, but I really loved school, I made friends and relationships that I still hold close to me to this day. ”

“ Really amazing teachers who inspired me to step in the kitchen and follow my passion. ”

“ Athboy was like another family for me, they really allowed me to find my own path and I wouldn't be where I am if I wasn't for my business teacher getting me my first job in a kitchen!



2210
Patisserie



Celebrating Irish footballer past pupil Jamie McGrath

JAMIE MCGRATH

Jamie Terence McGrath (born 30 September 1996) is an Irish professional footballer who plays for Scottish Premiership club Aberdeen and the Republic of Ireland national team. He started his career with St Patrick's Athletic and has since played for Dundalk, St Mirren, Wigan Athletic and Dundee United.

JAMIE'S THOUGHTS ON HIS TIME IN ATHBOY CS:

“ I enjoyed every minute of my time in Athboy Community School. I made great memories and found my best friends there. The support I received in my 5 years in the school gave me a great platform to succeed in my career. ”

Jamie McGrath



What I hope to do when I leave Athboy CS

ELLEN

“ I would like to study History in Trinity College Dublin. I want to be a Historian. ”

NEDIVA

“ I would like to study English, Drama and Film - Humanities in UCD. I would like to be a Screenwriter. ”

ÁINE

“ I plan to study English with Creative writing in UCD. I want to be an editor. ”

ELLA

“ I plan to study Psychology in Maynooth University to eventually follow a career as a Clinical Psychologist. ”

RAZVAN

“ I would like to study Accounting and Finance in Maynooth University. I would eventually like to be a Chartered Accountant. ”

EOIN (5th Year)

“ I plan to study Sports Science in University of Galway to pursue a career in as a Physiotherapist. ”

CONOR (5th Year)

“ I want to study Politics and Law in DCU to pursue a career as a Barrister or Politician. ”

MEGAN (5th Year)

“ I hope to pursue a career as a secondary school teacher of Business and Accounting. I plan to study Finance in Maynooth. ”

CIARA (5th Year)

“ I plan to study Business and Law in UCD. My dream is to be a solicitor. ”





*T*hings
to know
About
Athboy
Community
School

We have 615 students, 52 teachers and 9 SNAs



*We have a Meditation Room, a lecture theatre, 3 Art Rooms, 1 Kiln
We have two secretaries and two caretakers*



We have a dog, chickens, bees and a polytunnel



*We have 3 ASD Classes in An Cuan
and a sensory room*



*A PE Hall and a separate fully equipped gym, 3 Woodwork rooms,
2 Engineering rooms, a Graphics room and a DCG room*



*3 computer rooms, 5 Science Labs, 2 Home Economics rooms,
a Textile room, a fully stocked Library and a Nurture Classroom*



*L*ife in Athboy CS



*One full size grass soccer pitch, 6 basketball
and tennis courts, a Music Room*



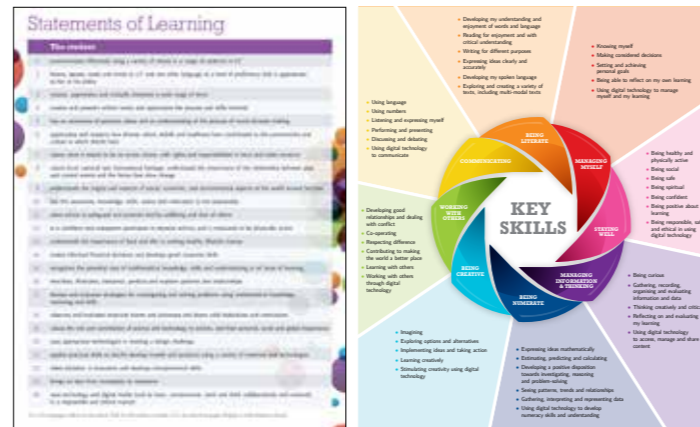


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ntroduction to Junior Cycle

The Junior Cycle Framework contains 24 statements of learning and eight principles which schools use to plan the programme for Junior Cycle.

The framework aims to develop eight key skills in students.



Students study a mix of subjects and short courses as well trying out other learning experiences. Almost all junior cycle students take courses leading to the Junior Certificate, the State examination taken at the end of the third year of junior cycle, when students are 15 years of age.

ASSESSMENT

Subjects are studied at either Ordinary or Higher Level. Three subjects, Irish, English and Mathematics, can also be studied at Foundation Level. During second and third year, students complete a number of Classroom-Based Assessments.



J

unior Cycle Subjects

CORE SUBJECTS

In ACS all students study seven core subjects which are examined in the Junior Certificate state exam:

- English
- Irish
- Maths
- History
- Religion

OPTION SUBJECTS

Students choose four option subjects from the following list:

- Geography
- Modern Foreign Language - French or German
- Engineering
- Wood Technology
- Graphics
- Applied Technology
- Visual Art
- Music
- Business
- Home Economics
- Science

SHORT COURSES

Students also do two short courses. These vary from year to year. They are assessed through Classroom based assessments.

They include;

- Digital Media Literacy
- Coding
- Philosophy
- Artistic Performance

WELLBEING SUBJECTS

The junior cycle also includes a number of subjects that are not formally assessed through state exams. Non-examination subjects at junior cycle include;

- Physical Education (PE)
- Social Political and Health Education (SPHE)
- Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Wellbeing – the ACS Way

Wellbeing in junior cycle is about young people feeling confident, happy, healthy and connected. We create an environment where wellbeing is priority by creating a caring culture in our school, by ensuring our teaching and learning is top quality, by building high trust relationships between staff and students and by developing policies and procedures which support the health and wellbeing of the whole school community.



Core Subjects At Athboy CS

- English
- Irish
- Maths
- Religion
- History



English

English in junior cycle aims to develop students' knowledge of language and literature, to consolidate and deepen their literacy skills and make them more self-aware as learners.

Junior Cycle English focuses on the development of language and literacy in and through the three strands: Oral Language, Reading, and Writing. The learning outcomes for each strand are:

- Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer
- Exploring and using language
- Understanding the content and structure of language



Gaeilge

Junior Cycle Irish builds upon the language developed during primary education. The learner's vocabulary is both reinforced and enriched at this stage and the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, spoken interaction and writing) are further developed.

Students who were exempt from the study of Irish in primary school must provide a copy of their exemption certificate on admission to re-implement the exemption.



Maths

Junior Cycle Maths provides students with access to important mathematical ideas to develop the mathematical knowledge and skills that they will draw on in their personal and work lives.

The specification for junior cycle mathematics focuses on developing students' ability to think logically, strategically, critically, and creatively through the unifying strand and the four contextual strands: Number; Geometry and trigonometry; Algebra and functions; and Statistics and probability.



Religious Education

Junior Cycle Religious Education focuses on developing knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values to enable young people to come to an understanding of religion and its relevance to life, relationships, society and the wider world. The course is built around three interconnecting strands: Expressing Beliefs, Exploring Questions and Living our Values.

Religious Education encourages students to reflect, question, critique, interpret, imagine and find insight for their lives. The students' own experience and continuing search for meaning is encouraged and supported.



History

The study of History is about exploring human experience over time and how that experience has shaped the world we live in today. Studying history develops our historical consciousness, enabling us to orient ourselves in time and to place our experiences in a broader framework of human experience.

The History course has three interconnected strands: Strand 1: The nature of history; Strand 2: The history of Ireland; Strand 3: The history of Europe and the wider world.

O

ption Subjects At Athboy CS

- *Geography*
- *Modern Foreign Language – French or German*
- *Engineering*
- *Wood Technology*
- *Graphics*
- *Applied Technology*
- *Visual Art*
- *Music*
- *Business*
- *Home Economics*
- *Science*



Geography

Geography is the study of the Earth's landscapes, peoples, places, and environments. Studying geography enhances students' ability to engage with issues such as sustainable development, economic systems, hazard management and climate change.

The Geography course has three interconnected strands: Exploring the physical world; Exploring how we interact with the physical world; and Exploring people, place, and change, with one overarching concept entitled Geoliteracy.



Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) There are three integrated strands of MFL for Spanish, French and Italian. Students study the five language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing.

Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages is organised around three integrated strands

1. Communicative competence
2. Language awareness
3. Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness.



Engineering

Engineering focuses on goal-oriented problem solving for the manufacture of products, with emphasis on efficiency, accuracy, precision and a high quality finish. This project-based approach to junior cycle Engineering requires students to develop a knowledge of materials and processes. Students get the opportunity to behave as engineers, and develop an engineering mindset.

There are three interconnected contextual strands: Processes and principles, Design application and Mechatronics.



Graphics

Graphics underpins all of the technology subjects and is transferable across a wide range of subjects such as mathematics, science and art. Throughout the course, students explore the geometric world to gain an appreciation of the importance of graphics in the world around them. They develop cognitive and practical skills both physically and through the use of computer-aided design.

Accurate technical drawings are essential in the design and manufacture of components and artefacts.

In the Junior Cycle, students have access to four technology subjects:

Engineering, Wood Technology, Graphics and Applied Technology



Wood Technology

In Wood Technology, students explore the natural and made world through the medium of design, seeking out opportunities to creatively and innovatively apply the material/resource in making and shaping their environment. Wood Technology focuses on developing students' understanding of, and skills in, the applications and impact of using wood as a resource. This is achieved through three interconnected contextual strands: Principles and practices, Design thinking and Wood science and materials.



Applied Technology

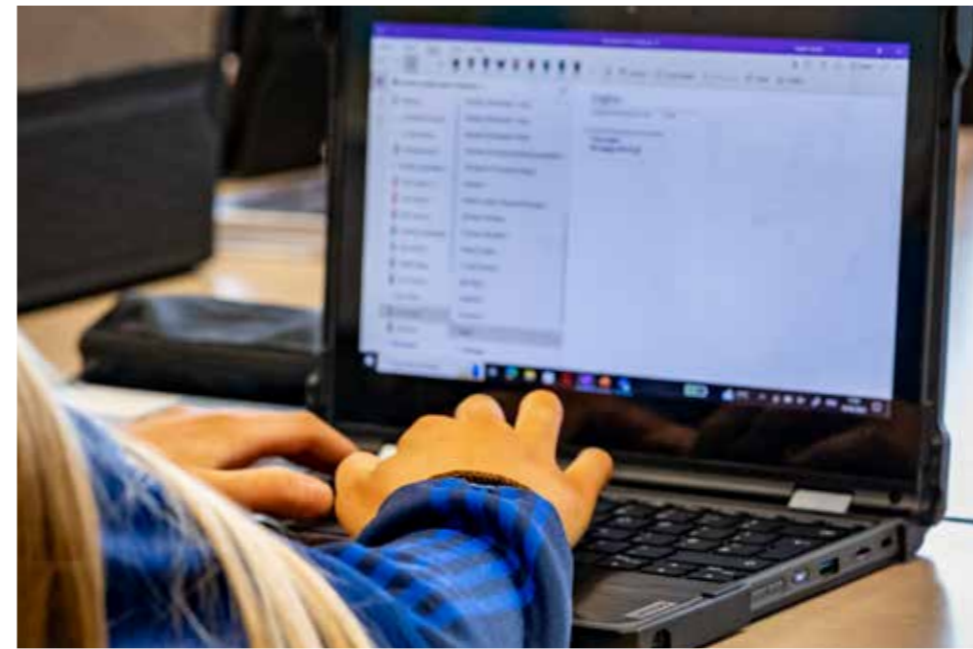
Applied Technology focuses on developing students' understanding of, and skills in, the application and impact of technologies in the world around them. This is achieved through three inter-connected contextual strands: Principles and practices, Energy and control and Technology and society.



Visual Art

Visual Art is a subject that promotes teaching and learning through art, craft and design. Visual Art also recognises and rewards a number of different forms of intelligence, including emotional intelligence; it develops personal qualities of expression and empathy.

Students are enabled to progressively improve their skills as an artist/craftsperson/designer in a space that is safe for them to explore ideas and diverse processes both creatively and imaginatively. This can be achieved through the interconnected strands of art, craft and design.



Business Studies

Business Studies at Junior Cycle focuses on improving students' understanding of the business environment and on developing skills for life, work and further study through the three inter-connected strands: Personal Finance, Enterprise and Our Economy.

It aims to stimulate students' interest in the business environment and how they interact with it.



Music

With music, students can immerse themselves intellectually, emotionally, physically and kinaesthetically in the learning experience. Junior Cycle Music focuses on giving students the opportunity to develop their musical knowledge, skills and cultural awareness through the practical and cognitive engagement with music.

This can be achieved through the three interconnected strands: Procedural knowledge, Innovate and ideate and Culture and context.



Home Economics

Junior Cycle Home Economics develops the knowledge, understanding, skills and values necessary to achieve optimal, healthy and sustainable living for every person as an individual, and as a member of families and society. It is studied through three interconnected strands: Food, Health and Culinary Skills; Responsible Family Living; and, Textiles and Craft.



Science

The junior cycle science course focuses on the development of students' knowledge of and about science through the unifying strand, Nature of science, and the four contextual strands: Physical world, Chemical world, Biological world, and Earth and space.

“There is a new focus given the subject which aims to promote greater engagement and thinking about how science works; carrying out investigations, communicating in science and the role and contribution of science and scientists to society”.



Short Courses At Athboy CS

- *Digital Media Literacy*
- *Coding*
- *Philosophy*
- *Artistic Performance*
- *Physical Education (PE)*
- *Social Political and Health Education (SPHE)*
- *Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE)*



Digital Media Literacy (DML)

Creating and sharing media in a digital environment has become an increasingly important feature of how young people communicate and engage with each other and with the wider world. Through studying this digital media literacy short course, students learn to use digital technology to engage in self-directed enquiry, to discriminate between multiple sources of information and to participate safely and effectively online environment.



Philosophy

This introduction to philosophy aims to engage students in philosophical enquiry and dialogue about life's big questions and to develop critical, creative, collaborative, caring thinkers.

There is a strong focus on students doing philosophy as well as learning about some of the big thinkers, past and present, who have grappled with life's big questions.



Coding

Understanding how computer hardware and software operate and relate to everyday life is an important area of learning for students. Problem solving and computational thinking skills are developed in this course as students create software projects using their own ideas and imagination. The course offers insight into possible future studies in computer science and software engineering.



Artistic Performance

This short course in artistic performance aims to engage students in artistic practices with others, by offering a structure that can be used to facilitate collaborative and individual imaginative and creative initiatives, leading to a group performance. The course is structured around three strands: Experiencing the arts, Planning and preparing and Participation and performance.



Social Personal Health Education (SPHE)

This short course in the school's Wellbeing programme in junior cycle, students have a dedicated space and time to learn about themselves, caring for themselves and others and making informed decisions for their health and wellbeing. There are four strands, each one focusing on learning in different but related areas of SPHE: Who am I?, Minding myself and others, Team up, and My mental health.



Physical Education

There are four strands, each one focusing on learning in different physical activity areas: Physical activity for health and wellbeing, Games, Individual and team challenges, Dance and Gymnastics. This short course in PE contributes to the Wellbeing programme by providing learning experiences which support students in being better able and more motivated to include regular physical activity in their lives, thereby contributing to their overall wellbeing.



Civic Social Political Education (CSPE)

This short course is built around three strands; rights and responsibilities, global citizenship and exploring democracy. There is a strong focus on student action aimed at giving students an experience of active citizenship. CSPE is an important part of a wellbeing programme within junior cycle as it enables students to feel connected to and take responsibility for the wellbeing of others. It also develops students' confidence, agency and engagement which are important characteristics of student wellbeing.





E *xtra* *Supports* *At* *Athboy* *CS*

- *An Cuan Centre*
- *Nurture Classroom*
- *Library*
- *Guidance Counsellor*
- *School Psychotherapist*
- *Chaplain*
- *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator*



Guidance Counsellor

ACS has a Guidance Counsellor who provides an area for students to visit to discuss future plans to share worries or concerns about school life in a confidential environment.

The Guidance Counsellor guides and supports students in choosing higher and further education courses as well as apprenticeships.

An Cuan

In our Cuan Centre, we support students with Autism, in two classes. Our students in the Cuan Centre are dual enrolled in the year group appropriate to their age and there is a high level of interaction amongst the students.



Nurture Classroom

The Nurture Classroom is a trauma programme which allows us the chance to support students who have experienced adverse childhood experiences. The Nurture group provides a balance of nurture and structure to a small group of students at different times throughout the school year.



Library

The library is a comfortable space with beanbags and tables where students can come and play board games or interact with students in their year group or read quietly at lunchtimes.

There are activities planned at each lunchtime for various clubs.



School Psychotherapist

The school Psychotherapist spends a day each week in the school supporting students referred by the Care Team.

Students who are at a particularly difficult point in their lives are referred by the Care Team to the psychotherapist.



Chaplain

Our Chaplain's role is to be a listening ear for students who can make appointments to visit for counselling or to offload a little. She also coordinates curricular Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) for all classes.

She leads Wellbeing activities in the school.



Extra Curricular Activities

These activities vary each year and have included;

SPORTS - football, soccer, hurling, camogie, running, boxing, athletics, basketball, volleyball, handball, tag rugby, badminton, gymnastics

MUSIC - choir, the musical, dance, ukelele, guitar, all instruments and the Christmas Concert

ART - Art Club, Craft Club

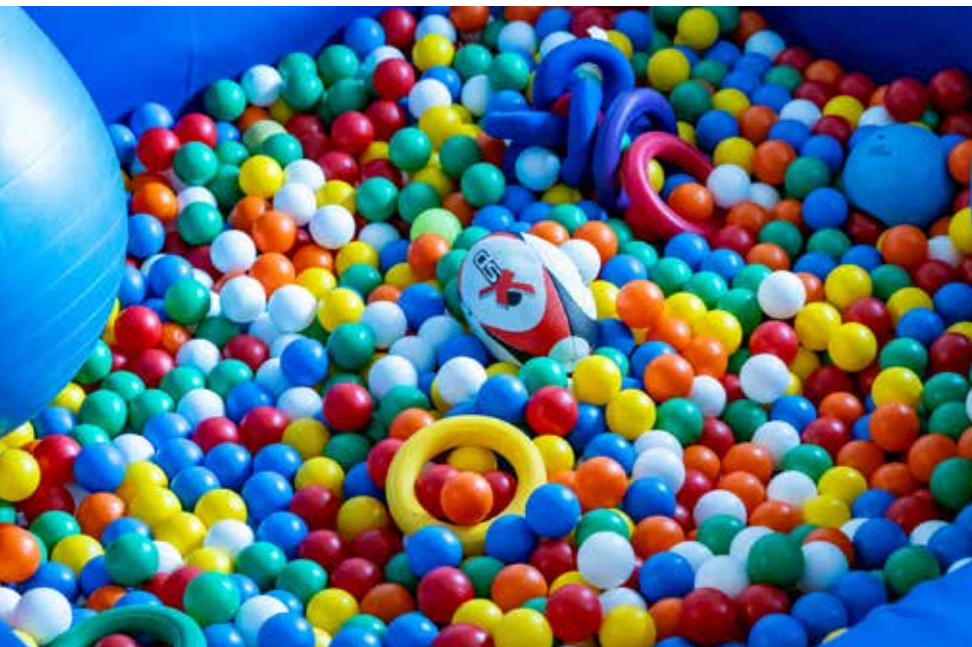
SUSTAINABILITY - Horticulture, Gardening Club, Green Schools Committee, Care of our chickens (Ginger, Mocha and Pepper), Agricultural Gardens, Bees, Gaisce Competition, Debating and Public Speaking Competitions

ICT - Robotics, Lego, Coding, Animation

COOKERY - Christmas Cake competition, bake sales for charity

SCIENCE - SciFest, Young Scientist Competition

Dance, Junk Kouture, Hair and Beauty



Additional Educational Needs Coordinator

Additional Educational Needs Coordinator is available to support students to access the curriculum and to support teachers and SNAs in the mainstream classroom. She also organises psychometric testing, Reasonable Accommodations in Exams and liaises with outside agencies and primary schools.





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