



Le Chéile Secondary School

## *A Guide for First Years to Choosing your Second Year Optional Subjects*

This leaflet gives details about all the **optional** subjects only and is **designed to help you decide which of these optional subjects would be best for you**. As a general rule, the subjects you should choose should be ones that you think you will be *good at* and that you think you will *enjoy*.



Dear Parents and Students,

We have come to the time of year where we are asking you to make decisions about the subjects you would like to continue studying for your Junior Cycle exams.

Normally we would hold an Information Evening for parents and students, however this is not possible as a result of the emergency legislation. We hope that this booklet, the power-point presentation and the student video will help you as you make your choices. The taster programme will also have given students an insight into each of the optional subjects.

Our Guidance Counsellor, Ms Carey is available through schoology or email, [mscopy@lecheilesecondaryschool.ie](mailto:mscopy@lecheilesecondaryschool.ie) if you have any questions or queries. Subject teachers are also available to answer any questions.

For more information, there are four websites which you may find useful:

[www.jct.ie/publications/publications](http://www.jct.ie/publications/publications) *Subject Information Leaflets*

[www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) Click on *Students* then click on *Subject Choice*

[www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) Click on *Tools* then on *Junior Cert Subjects*

## Core Subjects

All students study the following subjects:

Religion  
English  
Irish  
Maths  
History  
PE  
SPHE  
CSPE

## Optional Subjects

The full list of optional subjects is Art, Business Studies, French, German, Spanish, Graphics, Wood Technology, Music, Home Economics, Technology, History, Geography, Science, Coding & Digital Literacy.

Students choose 5 option subjects. These subjects are described on the following pages.

### Art

This subject welcomes, nurtures and enables students to learn and explore the creative world of Art, Craft & Design and reach their full potential.

### Course Content

Drawing - i.e. drawing people, objects, analytical drawing projects  
Painting and Mixed Media Still Life - drawing inanimate (not living) objects  
Graphic Design - posters, advertising, stamps, book covers  
Craftwork - batik, block printing, calligraphy, embroidery, fabric printing, weaving, puppetry, pottery  
3D work - sculpture, wood carving, construction, modelling

### Who would this subject suit?

This subject suits all levels and abilities, especially those with a creative outlook and imagination.

### Type of Homework / Projects / Assignments

Drawing, painting, design, and craft and research.

**Other points:** - Students must be enthusiastic, interested and be able to apply themselves to projects when necessary. Natural ability alone is not enough. At Junior Certificate level, students develop their skills, explore their creative side and maximise their possibilities.

### Career Note

Not all colleges require art as an essential subject for entry to art courses; however any student considering a career in art & design, graphics, industrial design, craftwork, etc., would be strongly advised to consider it for Junior Cert and also for Leaving Cert. It is also very useful for primary school teaching and apprenticeships. Please note that it is a strong advantage to

have Leaving Cert. Art when trying to get into architecture. (More so than Technical Graphics.)

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Art, Craft & Design at Leaving Certificate Level, it is preferable that the student has studied Art for the Junior Certificate.

### **Business Studies**

This subject looks at how businesses are set up, managed and financed. This subject has a very practical and modern approach to business - including setting up your own business.

### **Course Content**

Budgeting (household / businesses), consumer rights, banking, cheques, accounts (final accounts, club accounts), running your own business, industrial relations, etc.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit students who are interested in business and who show an interest in setting up their own business eventually and inventiveness. It is a basic requirement for anyone who wishes to work in a business environment.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Essays, multiple choice, projects, etc.

### **Other Points**

Students must remember that to achieve high grades in the Junior Certificate, they will have to work hard.

### **Career Note**

It is particularly **useful though not essential** for courses in accounting, advertising, banking, business, commerce, finance, management (incl. hotel management), marketing, and taxation. It would be a very useful subject for students who intend to set up their own business.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Economics, Business or Accounting at Leaving Certificate Level, it would be beneficial for the student to choose Business for the Junior Certificate as it provides a basis for the three Leaving Cert subjects, however this is not essential.

### **French**

### **Course Content**

Students will learn to read, write, speak and understand French. Students will also learn about life and culture in France and in other French speaking countries.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit students who have a love of languages and who are willing to work and apply themselves.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Using vocabulary correctly and appropriately with the help of dictionaries. Talking and writing about yourself and your experience of French. Reading French magazines, newspaper articles. Listening to audio tapes and watching DVDs. Looking at French websites.

### **Other Points**

French is spoken as a first language by around 136 million people worldwide. A total of 500 million speak it as either a first, second, or foreign language. Moreover, some 200 million people learn French as a foreign language. French speaking communities are present in 56 countries and it is the official language of over 30 countries. With English, it is the second official language of the EU. French is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.

### **Career Note**

Knowledge of a continental language is now highly desirable and graduates with degrees in computers and languages are very much in demand at the moment. In general, a pass grade in the Leaving Certificate in a foreign language is necessary for entry to the colleges in the National University of Ireland (NUI) - UCD, UCC, NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth, Pontifical University Maynooth and the Royal College of Surgeons. Though increasingly there are exceptions to this rule, particularly for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths degrees.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do French at Leaving Certificate Level, the student must do French for the Junior Certificate.

### **German**

#### **Course Content**

Students will learn to read, write, speak and understand German. Students will also learn about life and culture in Germany and in other German speaking countries.

#### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit students who have a love of languages and who are willing to work and apply themselves.

#### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Using vocabulary correctly and appropriately with the help of dictionaries. Listening and answering questions on conversations, news items, etc. in the language. Reading and answering questions on texts like advertisements, articles, recipes etc. Writing texts like notes, cards and postcards in the language. Listening to audio tapes in the language.

#### **Other Points**

German is spoken as a first language by around 95 million people worldwide. The language is the official language of six countries-Austria, Belgium, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Switzerland, all of which are located in Europe. About 5.6 million people speak German as their second language.

### **Career Notes**

Knowledge of a continental language is now highly desirable and graduates with degrees in computers and languages are very much in demand at the moment. In general, a pass grade in the Leaving Certificate in a foreign language is necessary for entry to the colleges in the National University of Ireland, though increasingly there are exceptions to this rule, particularly for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths degrees.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do German at Leaving Certificate Level, the student must do German for the Junior Certificate.

### **Spanish**

#### **Course Content**

Students will learn to read, write, speak and understand Spanish. Students will also learn about life and culture in Spain and in other Spanish speaking countries.

#### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit students who have a love of languages and who are willing to work and apply themselves.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Using vocabulary correctly and appropriately with the help of online resources available in Schoology. Talking and writing about yourself and your experience of Spanish. Reading, watching and listening to material in Spanish produced by native speakers around the world. Creating vlogs, blogs, videos and presentations highlighting the cultural aspects of this rich language. Having the opportunity to exchange information with native speakers in either South America or Spain.

### **Other Points**

Spanish is already one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It is the official language of more than 20 countries. It is now the second language of the USA! There are currently 400 million people speaking Spanish as a native language and a total of 500 million speakers worldwide. Spanish is the second most natively spoken language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese. Mexico contains the largest population of Spanish speakers. Spanish is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.

### **Career Note**

Knowledge of a continental language is now highly desirable and graduates with degrees in computers and languages are very much in demand at the moment. Business dealings between Ireland and South America (in particular Argentina), where

Spanish is the main language of communication and is set to increase dramatically in the near future. In general, a pass grade in the Leaving Certificate in a foreign language is necessary for entry to the colleges in the National University of Ireland, though increasingly there are exceptions to this rule, particularly for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths degrees. Moreover, studying Spanish can open the opportunity to do an exchange/ Erasmus or a work experience in either Spain or any other South American country.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Spanish at Leaving Certificate Level, the student must do Spanish for the Junior Certificate.

### **Graphics**

Graphics is recognised as the underpinning language of the technology disciplines and is transferable across a wide range of subjects such as mathematics, science and art. Students will use a variety of media to communicate their ideas and designs through this unique language. Throughout the course, students will explore the geometric world to gain an appreciation of the importance of graphics in the world around them. They will develop cognitive and practical skills such as graphical communication, spatial visualisation, creative problem-solving, design capabilities and modelling, both physically and through the use of computer-aided design.

### **Course Content**

The course consists of develop the student's creativity, spatial ability, and capacity to reason and communicate ideas through engagement with abstract and applied geometric problem-solving activities. It will also encourage the production of drawings that promotes the skills of communicating through graphics.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit students who have a love of drawing and problem solving. Being able to draw neatly and clearly is essential. It would suit students who enjoy problem solving and reasoning with graphical communication.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments.**

All the classes are practical and students will be drawing, drafting and using available technologies and software, such as SolidWorks to create digital 3D artefacts.

### **Career Note**

Graphics is not essential for architecture, engineering, or quantity surveying but any student thinking of a career in these areas would benefit much from the skills learned. It is also desirable for courses in technology and engineering, and it would be very useful for any students interested in trades such as mechanic, electrician or plumber.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Graphics at Leaving Certificate Level, the student are encouraged to do Graphics for the Junior Certificate. It will also support other mentioned above.

### **Wood Technology**

Wood Technology (WT) is a practical, hands-on subject, which gives students a good foundation in woodworking and graphical skills to enable students design and manufacture wooden items. Wood Technology is a subject that will allow students to explore and learn about a key natural and manmade resources that our current environment provides.

### **Course Content**

In Wood Technology, students will 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 as a material resource has seen much innovation and change. Technological advances have created significant opportunities to expand the use of wood as a resource for a broad range of applications. However, the uniqueness of this material and craft is that many of the traditional applications and processes are still of value, transcending the test of time.

**Who would this subject suit?**

Wood Technology would suit students who might like a subject with a large practical element. Students who like working with their hands to problem solve would enjoy this subject.

### **Career Note**

Wood Technology would be of benefit to those hoping to study courses in Architecture, Civil Engineering, Quantity Surveying, Site Management. It would be particularly useful for work in the Building Trades, or for training as a Carpenter or a Woodwork Teacher.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Construction Studies at Leaving Certificate level, a student is encouraged to have completed Wood Technology for the Junior Certificate.

### **Music**

The music course is designed to be a fun and enjoyable way for students to experience and learn about music in their lives. It features elements that appeal to every student, whether you're a performer, a composer, enjoy listening to your music on your ipad or simply love everything musical.

### **Course Content**

The Junior Cycle music course has 3 main sections:

#### **Listening Skills-**

Students learn about lots of fun and interesting elements of music including different styles of music, music from diverse

cultures, various musical instruments from around the world, the science of sound, and music in our day to day lives.

#### Composing Skills-

Students learn how to create our own music in lots of different ways. Students learn everything from song writing, to composing raps, music for advertising, film music, and music for video games.

#### Performance Skills-

In the music classroom students learn how to perform as a class or 'ensemble' as well as how to perform on their own or in smaller groups. Students can choose to learn any of the instruments available at Le Cheile including voice.

#### **Who would this subject suit?**

This subject would suit any student who loves music and likes to express themselves. It is a subject for students keen to explore their creative side as well as those students for whom music is a big part of their lives.

You do not need any previous musical experience to choose music for Junior Cycle and do well in the subject.

#### **Type of Homework/ Projects/ Assignments**

The homework and assignments are varied. Examples of work/ assignments include using music technology to create music, recording live instruments, researching assignments, performance tasks, active listening activities, and collaborating on group compositions or performances.

#### **Career Note**

The new Junior Cycle music course introduces music students to the many different career opportunities that are out there.

These include jobs in the media, film and television, advertising and marketing, website design, sound engineering, and content creation online. Students also learn about careers as performers and composers and all the different opportunities there are for those who like to perform and make their own music.

#### **Progression after the Junior Cycle**

Music for Junior Cycle prepares students for our senior cycle music course. It is a big advantage to students who wish to study music for leaving certificate to study music in Junior Cycle.

#### Home Economics

The central focus of Home Economics is achieving optimal, healthy and sustainable living for individuals, families and society. Individuals and families in every society are continually faced with issues that can impact on their wellbeing. Such issues include concerns relating to food, nutrition, diet and health; family and social concerns; consumer issues; sustainability in the home; responsible family resource management; and textiles and clothing.

Home Economics education develops students' essential lifeskills and personal independence. It supports the development of students who are critical, creative thinkers and encourages

students to be problem solvers capable of making ethically and socially responsible decisions.

### **Course Content**

The course consists of three strands:

1. **Food, Health and Culinary Skills-** encourages students to develop a healthy relationship with food through practical experiential learning. They apply their understanding of nutrition, diet and health principles in order to adopt a healthy lifestyle and make informed decisions that impact the health and wellbeing of themselves as individuals as well as within their families.
2. **Responsible Family Living-** where students develop lifeskills to enable them to manage resources responsibly and sustainably in the home, family and community.
3. **Textiles and Crafts-** focuses on developing students' textile skills, knowledge and creativity. Practical textile and craft skills are integral to this strand and include hand and machine sewing skills, and fabric texturing and embellishment techniques.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

This is a subject that can be very interesting and

relevant for all students who are interested in applying the knowledge they learn in class to practical settings.

The final examination consists of a practical food skills examination and a written examination. The practical examination and the written examination will each be allocated 50% of the marks available.

In Classroom-Based Assessment 1: Creative Textiles students are given two options from which to choose one Creative Textiles project:

1. Make a textile item for an individual or the home **OR**
2. Recycle or upcycle a textile item for an individual or the home

Classroom-Based Assessment 2 is comprised of a Food Literacy Skills Brief and will offer students the opportunity to demonstrate their culinary and creative food literacy skills and nutritional knowledge in the researching, analysing and planning of a food literacy skills brief for everyday living.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Creating food pyramids; designing menus; assessing special diets; examining and interpreting food labels to compare food products; following recipes and cooking dishes; costing recipes; using class notes and past exam papers; watching video clips, computer programs and other materials; interior design projects; budgeting; sketching items of clothing/outfits; sewing

to make small items for yourself or your home; keeping a record of work and recipes.

### **Other Points**

Business Studies and Science are two subjects that complement the subject. There will be a crossover of learning from SPHE also.

### **Career Note**

Studying Home Economics will be useful in the following career areas: culinary arts; dietitian/nutritionist; food scientist; nursing; interior design; fashion design; social care and tourism courses.

### **Progression after Junior Cycle**

To study Home Economics Social and Scientific at Leaving Certificate Level, the student should have studied Home Economics for their Junior Cycle.

### **Technology**

In Technology, students will use the design process to work through a task or problem order to arrive at a solution, which is usually in the form of an artefact or finished product. Students will learn how to safely use the tools, materials and equipment necessary to make this product.

### **Course Content**

The course has 3 components-Continuous based assessment, project work & the written exam.

As part of the coursework, students will design and make a project based on a given brief. Students will also complete a written exam.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

Students who like working out problems with different software's and mechanisms. It will really suit students who enjoy being practical and are creative.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Using the tools and equipment necessary to complete projects. Working with materials like wood, metals and plastics. Using electronic components to build simple circuits for use in tasks and projects.

### **Career Note**

Technology will help you to solve many technological problems you may experience in your everyday life. It will also teach you skills in the use of basic tools and equipment. Although not necessary, it will be very useful for students who wish to pursue careers in engineering or technology sectors.

### **Geography**

In Geography involves the study of places, people and what shapes the environment.

### **Course Content**

The course consists of three main strands:

Students explore how the **physical world** is formed and changed & how people **Interact with the Physical World**. They will also explore **people, Place and Change**. Students engage with topics

like globalisation, population and interdependence. The examination includes short questions & longer essay type questions. There will be questions on map-reading, and on explaining photographs, diagrams and charts. There is also an optional field-study project.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

Geography will suit students who care deeply about the environment.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Using information from different sources such as textbooks, maps, photographs, graphs, diagrams, newspapers, DVDs and the Internet. Learning and using important geographical terms. Learning how to read a map and drawing diagrams of geographical features.

### **Career Note**

Trinity College Dublin accepts geography as a science subject for entry into both the science and pharmacy faculty. Geography will also be a useful subject for students who pursue careers in town planning, environmental science, engineering, travel/tourism, weather forecasting and in global/development work.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

To do Geography at Leaving Certificate Level, it would be beneficial for the student to choose it for the Junior

Certificate as it provides a strong basis for the Leaving Cert subject, however this is not essential.

### **Science**

Science is present everywhere in the world around us, both living and non-living. Students will carry out investigations and develop an appreciation of the role and contribution of science and scientists to society.

### **Course Content**

Students will develop understandings of the **chemical world** and learn about composition and properties of matter. Students will also explore topics around **Earth and Space**. Students gain an understanding of the **physical world** and learn about concepts such as length, time, mass and temperature. Students learn about the **Biological World** & develop an understanding of the diversity of life, life processes and how life has evolved. Students will be examined on a report on the investigations/experiments that they carry out in class as well as a written exam.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

Students who are curious about the world & creative. Students who enjoy practical work like conducting experiments.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Working as part of a group, going on field trips, using computer-based resources, carrying out experiments

### **Other Points**

Many of the skills you learn while studying science such as problem solving and investigation skills are very useful outside of school and will be of use to you in whatever job you choose to do.

### **Career Note**

In third level there are many different types of science courses on offer and many different careers open to science students. These include such occupations as: pharmacist, radiographer, dentist, physiotherapist, nurse, psychologist, astronomer, teacher, vet, researcher. 1 of these lab science subjects are always needed in the Leaving Cert to qualify for entry to these kind of courses and for courses in the healthcare sector. Two lab science subjects are needed for entry to some medicine courses in Ireland.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

After the Junior Certificate, Science splits into three lab science subjects: Physics, Chemistry, Biology. If you would like to choose any of these subjects in Leaving Certificate, it is

important that you take Science as a subject for Junior Certificate.

### **Coding & Digital Media Literacy (Short Course)**

In coding, you will learn about computer science and develop the ability to formulate problems logically. You will design, write and test code through the development of programs, apps, games, animations or websites. In DML, students will investigate the ethical and legal issues around downloading media from the internet and develop an understanding of online safety.

### **Course Content**

Students will learn to understand the hardware and basic software which operates computers. Students also have the opportunity to research a topic/challenge in **computer science** that inspires them. Students are also introduced to complex levels of **coding**. Students will explore the **digital world** investigating issues around downloading media from the internet. They will compare how similar information is presented in different formats online & will learn to represent information using digital imagery. They will also learn to reference accurately when using online sources.

### **Who would this subject suit?**

Students who wish to use digital technology and the internet creatively, critically and safely, in support of their learning.

Students who are interested in how computer hardware and software operate. Students who like to problem solve & who have an interest in developing apps and games using code.

### **Type of Homework/Projects/Assignments**

Designing/writing code, researching interesting topics around computer science, building websites. Publishing items online, creating & analysing pieces of digital media, discussing privacy issues online, fact-checking, searching the internet.

### **Career Note**

Computer skills are now essential assets in any career & coding helps build the skills & knowledge that are particularly useful for careers in the Computers and ICT sector.

### **Progression after the Junior Certificate**

Experience in coding & Digital Literacy in the Junior Cycle will be very useful for studying Computer Science for Leaving cert as well as in the future for completing college/university assignments online etc.