



28<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and incoming First Years,

I want to extend a warm welcome to our incoming 1st year students. This is an exciting time but can also be quite an anxious time as your son/daughter prepares to move to secondary school. Our aim is to make the transition as smooth as possible and assure you that your son/daughter will be welcomed into a safe and caring environment.

Ours is a happy school where we value hard work and effort, and the positive atmosphere based on positive relationships between our students and teachers will enable your son/daughter to develop in to a mature, confident and well-educated person.

We encourage our students to actively participate in all areas of school life to help them achieve their personal best and experience success. I would encourage your son/daughter to get involved in the variety of activities offered by the school, whether it be through sports, the arts, creative writing etc.

Our entrance assessment will take place from the 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> of April and further correspondence will be issued regarding exact times. We have a close relationship with all our feeder schools and will visit each of the schools over the coming months to discuss the transition process with their 6<sup>th</sup> class teachers.

Our Meitheal camps which form an integral part of our transition support programme take place in August and further information will follow regarding these camps.

I have also attached a parents information pack with information about school that we shared with you at our information evening.

I would like to thank you for choosing our school and look forward to meeting you all and wish your son/daughter the very best as they begin their journey in Scoil Dara.

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**D. McCormack**  
**Principal**



28<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and incoming First Years,

I hope you are all keeping well and that all our incoming First Year students have settled back into school for their final few weeks as primary school students. Although the transition from primary to secondary school can be daunting, it is also a time of great excitement and new beginnings. Many parents or guardians will have been through this process before, for others this is a genuine step into the unknown.

I have two simple wishes for each student who will join us this Autumn:

Firstly, that each of them will be happy in their time with us at Scoil Dara and secondly, that each of them does their very best at whatever they do. These may seem like very simple aspirations, but to achieve them requires a serious, dedicated, continuous and collaborative effort. It is vital that we as a school community work together so we can achieve this goal.

As parents/guardians you have a very important role to play in your child's time with us. These years are ones of growth and change, of seeing your children develop into young adults. It is a wonderful transition, but it can also be very challenging. A simple piece of advice is to stay interested; monitor homework and study, encourage participation in extracurricular activities, help them to develop attitudes and habits that will serve them well as students of Scoil Dara.

Lastly to our incoming First Year students, you are the most important person in your education. We, the staff of Scoil Dara and your parents/guardians- will do all we can to support, guide and encourage but ultimately a responsibility rests with you, that, whatever you are doing, you give it your best. Only you will know what your best is, be it in class, at study, on the playing field, on stage or simply, but most importantly, in how you act towards others.

When you join us this Autumn you will be supported by our pastoral care team- tutors, year head and Guidance Counsellors. You will also be guided by our wonderful group of Meitheal Leaders and prefects who have been through this all themselves. We encourage you to reach out to and always embrace and link in with this support network.

I look forward to seeing you all in August, and to the journey that lies ahead and all the opportunities, successes, memories and friendships that will be made in your time at Scoil Dara.

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**C. Carty**  
**Year Head**

Growth

Respect

Wisdom

Community



## Information Pack for Parents



# Senior Management Team

**Principal:** David McCormack

**Deputy Principals:** Clodagh Ward, Glenda Dowling, Ronan McCabe

## Assistant Principal team

<b>Assistant Principals I</b>	Cian Carty	Year Head 1st Year (2023- 2024)
	Isobel Dalgarno	Year Head 2nd Year (2023- 2024)
	Thersa Tighe	Year Head 3rd Year (2023 – 2024)
	Patricia Keane	Year Head 5th Year (2023 – 2024)
	Caron Finlay	Year Head 6th Year (2023 - 2024)
	Jim Rattigan	Year Head 6th Year (2022 - 2023)
	Clare Kenny	Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator
	Elaine Gillick	LCAP Co-Ordinator & Teaching & Learning Co-Ordinator
	Eamon Mulvihill	ICT Co-Ordinator
<b>Assistant Principals II</b>	Brenda Breen	ASD Co-Ordinator
	Sarah Butler	SSE Co-Ordinator
	Claire Doyle	Co-Ordinator of Student Leadership
	Shea Farrell	Health & Safety Co-Ordinator
	Judith Glennon	Positive Behaviour Promotion Co-Ordinator
	Mary Goold	Co-Ordinator of Green Schools
	Adrian Guinan	PR Co-Ordinator
	Eilish O’ Brien	Wellbeing Co-Ordinator
	Theresa Payne	Faith Development & Promotion Co-Ordinator
	Lesley Vivash	Attendance Officer
<b>Programme Co-Ordinator</b>	Eamon Ryan	

**All contacts can be made through the school’s general office.**

**Office hours 8.30am – 4.30pm - Monday to Friday**

(Closed for lunch 12:00 – 13:00)

## Our Pillar Values

Growth

Respect

Wisdom

Community



The crest and pillar values have been developed as a community project over the last 4 years. The crest itself was designed by students and students identified the core community values that they saw represented in this emblem: **Community, Growth, Respect and Wisdom**. We worked with students to identify the actions and behaviours for learning associated with each of the values as a clear guide and support to our engagement with our learning and the development of positive relationships within the Scoil Dara community.



## Scoil Dara's Pillar Values



### Respect

- Valuing the learning opportunities and being inquisitive
- Cooperating with teachers and supervisors -
- Helping others by contributing to a positive learning atmosphere
- Making efforts to positively engage with my learning
- Working to support others and involving everyone
- Listening actively to the ideas and opinions of others and reflecting on my own ideas and opinions
- Challenging myself and not giving up on myself/my learning.
- Considering others when sharing opinions
- Showing gratitude towards everyone involved in the learning community
- Supporting your peers
- Accepting that we are all unique and have value

### Wisdom

- Learning from others, being inquisitive, listening effectively, gaining insights and understanding the perspectives of others
- Maintaining organisation by regular review of Journal
- Accepting advice and guidance as an expression of care
- Being inquisitive about life and learning - cultivating positive outlook
- Adhering to the school policies in behaviours and interactions with others
- Embracing the student-designed pillar values in and outside school
- Taking time to reflect and check in with personal values before responding to a situation
- Keeping an open mind especially in new situations -
- Be open to work with others - being inclusive
- Helping our school community in every way you can – making positive suggestions and getting involved in initiatives
- Being aware of possible obstacles along the way and considering solutions

### Community

- Seeking ways to become actively involved in school groups/teams and projects in our community
- Paying attention to and taking care of our shared school environment
- Thinking of ways to actively improve our school environment
- Standing up for what is right and seeking support as needed
- Participating in school events and co/extra-curricular activities
- Being inclusive in our engagement with others
- Encouraging others to be the best version of themselves
- Making collective decisions and respecting the perspectives of others
- Feeling and showing empathy toward others, and appreciating their experience
- Working together to achieve our shared goals
- Volunteering for local projects to develop your surroundings

### Growth

- Learning from challenges and setbacks as opportunities for growth.
- Developing positive social skills
- Being inquisitive about our learning and valuing a growth mindset
- Seeking help or clarification - working to develop our understanding
- Sharing our learning with others - supporting each other
- Connecting with our spirituality and developing a deep understanding of our faith
- Acknowledging the mistakes we have made or when we recognise that harm has been caused
- Seeking ways to repair damaged relationships -
- Reflecting on past behaviours and seeking for new understanding
- Taking care of our wellbeing - being mindful of negative situations
- Supporting and celebrating the positive growth of self and others

## The School Day

- School starts at 09:00 Monday to Friday
- Students attend Tutor time/Assembly from 09:00 – 09:12 am
- Classes are 58 minutes in duration
- Classes finish at 15:50 Monday to Thursday and 13:24 on Friday
- Break time is 11:08 – 11:28 and Lunch time is 13:24 – 13:54
- The school building will open before 8:00am however supervision will only be available from 8:30am
- Students should arrive in school between 8:30am and 8:40am so that they have sufficient time to organise themselves before classes begin at 09:00 each morning

9:00	Assembly Sáid Ó'Flanagan 09:00-09:12 09:12-10:10	Assembly Sáid Ó'Flanagan 09:00-09:12 09:12-10:10	Assembly Eileen O'Flanagan 09:00-09:12 09:12-10:10	Assembly Adrian Brady 09:00-09:12 09:12-10:10	Assembly Eileen O'Flanagan 09:00-09:12 09:12-10:10
10:00	English P2 Brenda Breen, Susan Butler 10:10-11:08	English P2 Linda O'Shea 10:10-11:08	English P2 Brenda Breen, Kate Haffernan, Sarah 10:10-11:08	Viggo Art P2 Teresa Eddy, Andrew Conner 10:10-11:08	English P2 Linda O'Shea 10:10-11:08
11:00	RTI P2 Marie Lynch 11:20-12:20	Civic, Social & Political Education (Stem... P2 Ulrika van der Lijde 11:20-12:20	Math P2 Liam Mullan 11:20-12:20	History P2 Linda O'Shea 11:20-12:20	Physical Education/STEM Course P2 Liam O'Sullivan 11:20-12:20
12:00	Mathematics P2 Ola Carroll, Zoe Cahill, Patricia Keane 12:26-13:24	Geography P2 Aislinn O'Shea 12:26-13:24	History P2 Karl Whelan 12:26-13:24	Mathematics P2 Ola Carroll, Patricia Keane 12:26-13:24	Science P2 Deirdre M. Mullan 12:26-13:24
13:00					
14:00	Math P2 Liam Mullan 13:54-14:52	Social, Personal & Health Education (SP... P2 Sáid Ó'Flanagan 13:54-14:52	Viggo Art P2 Teresa Eddy, Andrew Conner 13:54-14:52	Science P2 Deirdre M. Mullan 13:54-14:52	
15:00	English P2 Linda O'Shea 14:52-15:50	Assembly P2 Sáid Ó'Flanagan 14:52-15:50	Art P2 Karl Whelan 14:52-15:50	English P2 Linda O'Shea 14:52-15:50	

Typical Timetable

## Formation of classes

- All 1<sup>st</sup> Year classes in Scoil Dara will be mixed ability groupings
- All students will follow common courses in first year
- The formation of class groupings is a complex and challenging task - it is not always possible to keep groups of 'friends' together
- Parents should inform the school in advance of any pertinent information which may warrant consideration when forming class groups via the Year Head  
**(ciancarty@scoildara.ie)**
- Each class has a Class Tutor. The tutor is a member of our teaching staff who will meet them daily and looks after their pastoral needs. The tutor is their point of contact to whom they can talk with if there is any problem with which they need help.
- Each year group has a Year Head Teacher, who has overall responsibility for the year group. They deal with pastoral and behaviour issues in the year and have a great level of interaction with the students in the Year group.

## Induction Days for 1<sup>st</sup> Years

First-Year students begin on their own in August. These days are important orientation days for the students and are led by our Meitheal students. The Meitheal programme is a student mentoring programme where a group of students in 6<sup>th</sup> year meet with all 1<sup>st</sup> Years before all students return to school and throughout the school year. During the induction days, students will get a chance to get to know their school, make new friends, tour the school and visit classrooms.

## Attendance and Punctuality

- Academic achievement is directly linked to student attendance
- It is imperative that students have good attendance and are punctual every day
- Scoil Dara will carefully monitor attendance & punctuality
- All student absences must be explained by note in the Diary
- School has a legal obligation to report all absences to Túsla (Child & Family Agency)
- **Notes of Explanation for absenteeism** must be presented on day of return to school and left with the class tutor.
- **Arriving late** - Students arriving late to school must present to school reception to sign in and have their journal stamped. Notes to explain late arrival must be presented to our Student Registration officer. Unexplained late arrival will result in the student having to present to school at 8:15am the following morning for detention.
- **Leaving Early** - Please ensure all Leaving Early notes are signed in the journal by the parent/guardian. Students must present this note to their year head early in the week/morning of required leave for approval. The student must always sign out at reception before leaving school.

## Behaviour for Learning

- Integral part of educational experience of Scoil Dara
- High expectations of everyone
- Based on positive school environment, positive attitudes and positive relationships
- All policies including our Code of Positive Behaviour have been developed in line with legislation and national guidelines
- Emphasis on recognition and affirmation of positive behaviours & attitude
- When things do go wrong for a student, it is vitally important that they learn from their mistake and have an opportunity to put things right
- Parental support and positive endorsement of our community and learning values are crucial

## School Uniform

GIRLS	BOYS	PE Uniform
Wine school Jumper	Grey School Jumper	School PE top
White Shirt	Blue Shirt	Black Shorts (worn under tracksuit)
School Kilt Trousers (optional) - must be Hunter 280 style	Grey Trousers	Black tracksuit bottoms Sports Trainers
School Tie	School Tie	Black tracksuit bottoms
Wine socks or tights		Sport trainers
Black/Brown footwear. No obvious or coloured logo visible, no metal attachments, and with a heel not higher than 50mm	Black/Brown footwear. No obvious or coloured logo visible, no metal attachments, and with a heel not higher than 50mm	School PE top
School Jacket: Hunter 'Norway'	School Jacket: Hunter 'Norway'	

Uniform Suppliers		
<b>Books &amp; Gifts</b> Kilcock Book Shop Church St. Kilcock Co. Kildare	<b>Ted Murtagh</b> Haggard St. Trim Co. Meath	<b>Uniform Warehouse</b> Finnerty House Old School Road Maynooth Co. Kildare

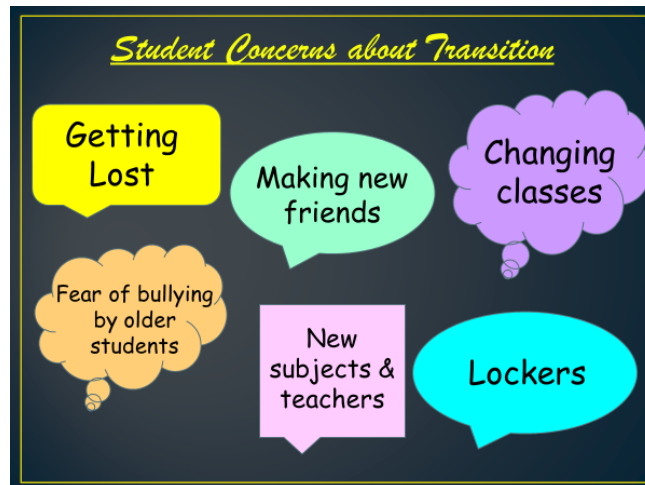
*Our PE/ extra-curricular top is manufactured by O'Neills and can be purchased from Grants uniform suppliers in Dublin 7 through their website [Grantsclothing.ie](http://Grantsclothing.ie) at a cost of €45. There is also an option of paying a deposit on ordering and completing the payment at a later date.*

- Full school uniform must be worn to and from school everyday
- On days where PE is a scheduled class students wear full PE uniform
- School tie must be worn everyday
- Skirts must not be rolled up
- Only the school jacket is permitted on school grounds
- One pair of small stud earrings are allowed
- Excessive jewellery, tattoos, extreme hairstyles and piercings are strictly forbidden



## Transition from Primary to Post Primary school

- Most students settle in by the end of the first week
- $\frac{1}{4}$  take up to one month to settle in
- $\frac{1}{6}$  students will take longer than a month to settle in
- Girls take longer than boys
- They will miss their old primary school



## Student Responsibilities

We want each student to receive a holistic education and push themselves to be the best versions of themselves. We want them to be ambitious, to have respect for people, be prepared and be in school every day.

## Parental Responsibilities

We want to have good working relationships with our parents/guardians. To do this as a partnership between the school and you to support your son/daughter we ask that you:

- Talk to the school – the class tutor and Year Head are key links within the school community
- Model & nurture a positive attitude towards school and learning
- Nurture resilience and growth mindset in your son/daughter
- Familiarise yourself with their timetable and school documents
- Give your son/daughter responsibility for their own property, learning and conduct
- Supervise and limit the amount of time spent by students on mobile phones
- If you have any concerns at all, please make contact. The sooner we know about any issues the better it will be for all concerned.

## **Mobile Phones**

Students are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. Students that bring their mobile phones to school must ensure that:

1. They are switched off at all times while on the school premises (this includes outdoor areas)
2. They are to be kept out of sight in the student's locker or school bag.

Confiscated phones are handed into the school's main office. Confiscated phones will be stored in the main office until after school on the Friday (or the last school day of that week) of its confiscation and can then be collected by a parent/guardian between 1.20pm and 4.00pm. If a parent/guardian is unable to attend they must ring the main office to nominate a person to collect the phone in their place.

At times, under teacher instruction, students may use a mobile phone device for educational purposes in class. It is only with the instruction of a teacher that a mobile phone may be powered on while in school.

Parents/guardians are requested not to contact students, through their mobile phones, during school time. Any parent/ Guardian wishing to urgently contact their son/daughter may contact the Schools front office to relay urgent messages. Any student needing urgently to contact their parent(s)/ Guardian (s) may do so through the front office.

## **School Journal**

During your time in Scoil Dara, the most important book for students to have with them every day is their School Journal. The journal supports students with organisational skills and important correspondence. Students record all subjects for each day and input work covered in class and home learning to be completed. It is also a key means of communication and a way of keeping regular contact with parents and allows parents/guardians to monitor homework, progress and behaviour. It is essential that a parent/guardian checks the student journal regularly and signs the journal at the end of each week and keeps up to date with all notes/correspondence from their son's/daughter's teachers. The school journal should be kept neat and tidy and free of graffiti.

The school journal has an outline of all our key policies in Scoil Dara. Parents are requested to read through each of our policies as directed in the journal and indicate their and their son's/daughter's understanding and agreement to work with them to the best of one's ability with providing their signatures in the journal.

Once the required signature is in your son's/daughter's journal we know that we have your full support in our efforts to make sure that your child reaches his/her full potential in everything that they get involved in Scoil Dara, with the objective being that they really enjoy their second level education.

## Lockers

Lockers are made available to students from monies collected through the school services charge. Subject text books and materials should be stored neatly in the locker to support student organisation throughout the school day. Time is needed to develop the positive habit of utilising the locker at the required times: before school, morning break, lunch break and at the end of the school day and our Meitheal team and tutors will support students in developing this skill. We advise that students leave any valuables that they may have in the locker. Students should also use the lockers as much as possible for their books, as this cuts down on the considerable weight of the bags. Students should get into the habit of going to lockers at break times to gather the books for the classes in the next session, as students are not permitted to go to lockers between classes.

## Book Support Scheme

Scoil Dara has operated a Book Support Scheme since 2016 with the intention of assisting with the significant cost of transition into the second level system.

The book support scheme includes the following textbooks for Junior Cycle (2023-2026):

- C.S.P.E. - Take a Stand (textbook and workbook)
- English - Touchstones 1 (textbook and activity book set)
- Geography - Geography in Action (textbook, portfolio and workbook)
- History - Artefact (textbook and workbook)
- Religion - Inspire (textbook and workbook)
- Science - Essential Science New Edition (textbook, workbook, lab book)

All other textbooks including those associated with options and languages (Irish/French/German) are purchased independently.

The book support scheme cost for 2023-2026 is paid in 1<sup>st</sup> Year through 3 instalments and no further payment is required after Year 1. Parents are not obliged to enter the book support scheme and can purchase the books themselves if preferred. If a parent or guardian wishes to avail of the book support scheme, an instalment plan must be commenced by 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2023 on the **Easy Payment Plus** platform accessed through our website. The instalment plan is divided into 3 equal payments of €40 with the final payment due on or before the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2023. Each of the book scheme texts serve as the subject text for the three-year span of the Junior Cycle.

Textbooks are costly and therefore should be managed and maintained carefully, many of them will be required for the three years of the Junior Cycle and represent a core resource supporting student learning, revision and preparation for assessments and exams. We encourage students to use, carry and store their textbooks with due regard to their cost and value.

- Textbooks not included in the Book Rental Scheme should be purchased separately.
- Option subjects' textbooks should be purchased after final option choices are confirmed.

## Required Materials for School

Being learning ready is a significant contributing factor to the quality of any students' engagement with classroom learning and the activities taking place there. We rely on the support of parents to ensure that all students develop good learning habits, we support these in school with regular checks and reminders, through posters and by using the student journal.

We have compiled a list of required materials that will help your son/daughter prepare best for the opportunities for class-based learning, extension-exercises and home-learning which are collectively designed to optimise the learning potential of all students.

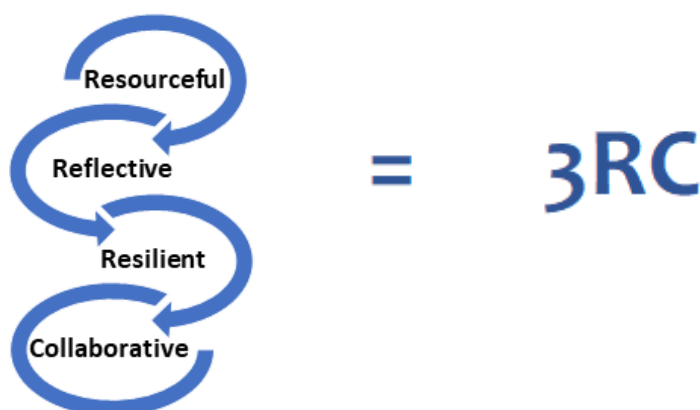
Please refer to this list with your son/daughter regularly to make sure that they are managing their materials and developing their positive learning habits:

- **Student Journal** (taking record of learning assigned in each subject. Work ticked when completed)
- **Pencil Case** (pens, pencils, erasures, ruler, coloured pencils/markers as required, no tipp-ex)
- **Geometry Set and Calculator** (Sharp ELW531B)
- **BPA Free, reusable water bottle** – By request of our Student Council

## Empowering and Supporting Student Learning: The 3RC Model

Scoil Dara has been involved in BLP (Building Learning Power) training to promote and support effective learning habits among junior cycle students since 2017. Central to the approach taken by the Scoil Dara team in developing a programme best suited to the context of our Junior Cycle students are four central aims:

- Facilitating student understanding of the nature and benefit of positive learning habits:
- Promoting a personal understanding of effective learning habits and practices, endorsing an enjoyment of school life, enhancing positive classroom environment, optimising teaching and learning engagement, developing confidence and independence, affirming collaboration and efficacy within a team.
- Creating a relevant and accessible language of learning which all teachers and learners recognise, utilise and understand in a very practical and “every opportunity” sense.
- Designing opportunities for students to apply and practice the central habits in school and at home and thus support student capacity and celebrate student success.
- Developing assessment models based on the central learning habits which will create a deeper awareness of the practice and process of the habits as well as the positive outcomes and efficacy of their use.
- The module focuses on developing four learning dispositions or habits - **3RC**



- **Resourceful** - being able to use a range of learning strategies and knowing what to do when you get stuck
- **Reflective** - being able to think about yourself as a learner and how you might be able to do this better
- **Resilient** - not giving up, looking at the learning challenge creatively
- **Collaborative** - being able to learn with and from others, as well as on your own

## The Curriculum

<u><b>Core Subjects (Exam)</b></u>	<u><b>Optional Subjects</b></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Gaeilge</li><li>○ English</li><li>○ Mathematics</li><li>○ Science</li><li>○ Geography</li><li>○ History</li><li>○ French/German</li><li>○ Religion</li><li>○ Science</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Music</li><li>○ Visual Art</li><li>○ Home Economics</li><li>○ Engineering</li><li>○ Applied Technology</li><li>○ Wood Technology</li><li>○ Graphics</li><li>○ Business Studies</li></ul> <p><i>(At the end of October, students will indicate their preference for 2 subjects that they wish to continue studying for their JCPA)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u><b>Core Subjects (Non-Exam) &amp; Other Learning Experiences</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Social, Personal &amp; Health Education (SPHE)</li><li>○ Civic, Social &amp; Political Education (CSPE)</li><li>○ Physical Education (PE)</li></ul>	

## The Junior Cycle



The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including their aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development. The new *Junior Cycle* is designed to meet the needs of all learners and to facilitate such development.

The main difference for students studying the JC is the focus on **HOW** students learn as well as the established focus on **WHAT** they learn. In addition, schools are being given much greater flexibility in designing their curriculum to meet the needs of their students. There has also been a welcomed reduction in the number of subjects that students will sit exams in when they get to third year

The JC is underpinned by 8 *Principles* (see over). It aims to develop 8 *Key Skills* in learners. The school curriculum must cover 24 *Statements of Learning* (see over) and can be structured in different ways (subjects/short courses/other learning experiences). For more information on the JCSA check out their excellent website <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/>

The following section contains a brief description of each of the subjects being offered by Scoil Dara in 2023-2024.

## Gaeilge



The aim of Junior Cycle Gaeilge is to improve your ability to communicate through Irish (trí Ghaeilge). You will focus on improving your language skills through concentrating on four areas: your oral language through speaking, your aural language through listening to others and digital media, your written language through writing in Irish and your literacy through reading passages, poems and stories written in Irish.

### **What will I learn in Irish?**

Some of the things you will learn include:

- How to develop your skills of communication trí Ghaeilge
- How to use the Gaeilge that you already have and add to it
- How to develop your skills in listening, reading and speaking Gaeilge
- How to write letters, postcards, essays and stories in Irish

### **Is learning Gaeilge anything like what I did in primary school?**

Learning Gaeilge will be very similar to what you have learned already. You will build upon many activities you carried out in primary school such as creative writing, talking ‘as gaeilge’ in pairs and groups, using digital media to listen to people speaking the language and reading from a range of poems and stories. All of the Gaeilge that you have learned so far will be of great help to you in post-primary school. Students from the Gaelscoileanna will be challenged in new ways to further develop their language skills.

### **How useful will Gaeilge be to me?**

There are many advantages in being bilingual. Gaeilge is one of our official languages as well as being an official language of the European Union. Learning Gaeilge also helps you in learning other new languages. Careers in which you may develop and use your Irish language skills include: Teaching, working as a Civil Servant, careers in Business, Law, Communication, Translation and the Media.

**“Beatha teanga í a labhairt”**



## English

English is an international language spoken or studied by people in almost every part of the world. In English lessons you will learn how to communicate effectively with others and to express your point of view in many different ways. You will find out about great writers and use your own imagination and creativity. You will develop your knowledge of the English language, literacy and literature.

### **What will I learn in English?**

Some of the things you will learn include:

- How to think differently and communicate clearly
- How to speak and write in interesting ways about things that happen in your life
- How to explore different ways of using English e.g. interviewing, storytelling, describing, newspaper reporting...etc
- How to find out about the great writers of Ireland and the works and enjoy reading some of their work

### **Is learning English anything like what I did in primary school?**

Most of the time it will be very like learning English in primary school but the content of what you learn will be more challenging and thought provoking. You will do similar work and you will continue to gain confidence in speaking, writing and reading. As in primary school, English will help you to develop as a person. You will continue to learn about the wonderful power of words and your imagination.

### **How useful will English be to me?**

The development of skills in English will set you up for lifelong learning. You will continue to develop your English language skills throughout your life and hopefully you will always have a love of reading. Any third level course in English provides you with skills for a variety of positions working in Business, Government, Research, Education, Publishing and the media.



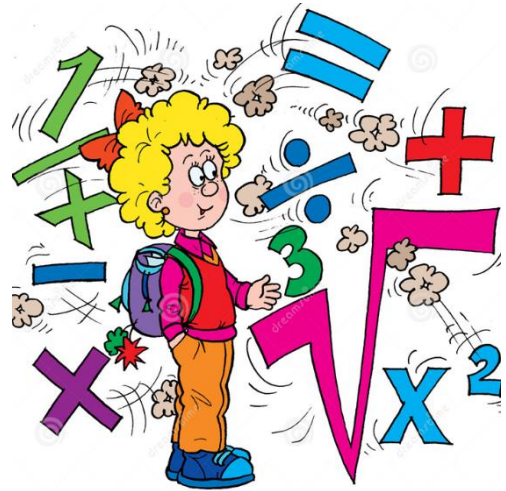
## Mathematics

Mathematics will develop your problem-solving skills and your ability to present logical arguments. Mathematics lessons will better prepare you to be able to use what you learn in real situations of everyday life and work.

### **What will I learn in Maths?**

Some of the things you will learn include:

- Sets
- Number systems
- Algebra
- Functions & graphs
- Trigonometry
- Geometry
- Statistics
- Applied arithmetic & measure



### **Is learning Mathematics anything like what I did in primary school?**

Junior cycle Mathematics builds upon many of the things you did in primary school for example, when you learned about numbers, calculations, algebra, shapes, measures...etc. In post-primary school, many Maths teachers use practical work and real-life examples to help you to understand concepts and to solve problems. Students often take part in investigations and group work. This is very similar to primary maths.

### **How will mathematics be useful to me?**

Mathematics is a life skill! Studying mathematics prepares you for everyday tasks such as telling the time and handling money sensibly. It prepares you for business calculations. Mathematics prepares you for third level courses in areas such as Science, Technology and Engineering.

## Science



Science is the study of the world around us. Scientists ask a lot of questions and try to find out answers to their questions. Junior Cycle Science covers three areas of science: Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Physics is the study materials and energy. Chemistry is the study of what substances are made of and how they react with each other. Biology is the study of all living things especially plants and the human body.

### **What will I learn in Science?**

Some of the things you will learn about in Science include:

- \* What plants and animals are made of
- \* The environment and how to care for it
- \* The materials that make up the world around us
- \* How materials change and can be changed by chemical reactions
- \* Forces and energy
- \* How things work e.g. magnets, electricity...etc

### **Is learning Science anything like what I did in primary school?**

In primary school you learned about living things, energy and forces, materials, and about caring for the environment. You also explored the world around you and learned to work like a scientist. Junior Cycle Science will use and develop these science skills and your curiosity about stuff.

### **How useful will Science be to me?**

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 great value to you in whatever job you choose to do. Scientific knowledge is helpful in your daily life at home and in looking after yourself and your family. There are numerous third level courses in many different types of Science which lead to a huge variety of career opportunities. These include becoming a Dentist, Doctor, Pharmacist, Teacher, Vet, Psychologist, Beauty Therapist, Astronomer, Researcher.... etc.

## **Modern Foreign Language**

In modern foreign language lessons such as in French or German, you will learn how to read and speak the language. Learning a modern foreign language is a really good way to exercise your memory and problem solving skills as so many parts of your brain are involved in learning a language.



### **What will I learn in language lessons?**

Some of the things you will learn include:

How to speak about yourself, your family, friends, hobbies, sports, school...etc in that language

How to listen and understand what other people speaking the language are saying

The skills of listening, reading and writing in that language.

The grammar and vocabulary of that language

Some information about the countries where people speak the language and their way of life

### **Is learning a modern foreign language anything like what I did in primary school?**

You have more than likely been learning English, Gaeilge or even another language already, so you already know a lot about how languages work. This will be of great help to you as you make comparisons between the languages. You also learned about tenses for verbs and various grammar rules in primary school. These will be revised and built upon in post-primary.

### **How will a Modern Foreign Language be useful to me?**

The biggest advantage in learning foreign language is the flexibility and freedom it provides you with regards to employment and travel. Due to globalization of markets, employers are always looking for people with skills and the ability to speak a foreign language. Travel is much more enjoyable when you can communicate with the local people of the country you are visiting. There are many career opportunities in modern foreign languages such as; Tourism, Catering, Education, Business and Translation Services.

## History

History involves the study of people (ordinary and famous) who lived in the past. In History you will learn about sources of evidence on which we base our understanding of their lives. You will find out about important changes and events that over time have helped to shape the world that we live in today.

### **What will I learn about in History?**

Some of the things you will learn about include:

- \* How people have lived during different periods
- \* How we find out about the past
- \* How important changes took place during different periods of time, what caused these changes and how people were affected by these changes
- \* A very broad understanding of local, Irish and international History

### **Is History anything like I did in primary school?**

In primary school History (SESE), you gained knowledge and understanding of people, events and developments in the past. Junior cycle History continues to build upon these areas of understanding.

### **How will Junior Cycle History be useful to me?**

Junior cycle History will help you to better understand the world in which live. You will gain experience of working with evidence and learn to tell the difference between fact and opinion. History is a very practical subject because it involves learning about people, countries, societies and cultures. History can help you in many different careers, especially those linked with Heritage, Tourism, Research and the Environment.



## **Geography**

Geography is about the study of places, people and the environment. You will learn how the environment influences people and how people impact on it. You will develop your ability to draw and understand maps, graphs and diagrams, as well as studying photographs and collecting information through fieldwork.



### **What will I learn about in Geography?**

Some of the things you will learn about include:

- \* Where people live (the human habitat) and why they live there (population and settlement patterns)
- \* The natural world and what influences and shapes it
- \* The world of human activities and what influences and shapes it
- \* How to get and use information from different sources such as textbooks, maps, photographs, graphs, diagrams, newspapers, digital media and the internet

### **Is Geography anything like I studied in primary school?**

In primary school you studied Geography as part of SESE. You have also learned about many geographical ideas through studying the local, national and global environment. Indeed, you will have learned much about Geography from news reports, the weather forecast and global events. Junior Cycle Geography will build upon their ideas.

### **How will Geography be useful to me?**

Everybody uses Geography in their daily lives, when you think of where to go on holidays or wonder what tomorrow's weather will be like, you are thinking about Geography. When you look at an atlas map, a town plan or a weather map, you are applying your geographical skills. Studying Geography prepares you for careers in Town Planning, Outdoor Pursuits Education, Weather Forecasting, Tourism and Transport. Geography keeps you informed about topics which arise in conversation, current affairs, media reports such as climate change, renewable energy and aid to poorer countries.

## Music

Music is a really important part of everyone's life. Can you just imagine a world without music? In Junior Cycle Music, you will sing and possibly learn how to play a musical instrument. You will learn about many types of music such as pop, classical, rock, and traditional Irish music. You will also start composing some of your own music.

### **What will I learn about in Music?**

Some of the things you will learn about include:

- \* Many types of music
- \* How to read and write music
- \* How to sing songs and maybe how to play an instrument
- \* How to perform and develop your confidence as a performer

### **Is Music anything like what I did in primary school?**

In primary school you learned to sing songs at various stages. You also may have been in the school choir, musical group or orchestra. You may have been involved in a school production or simply enjoy listening to lots of different types of music. Junior Cycle Music will help you to become even better at performing and broaden your knowledge about music in general.

### **How will Music be useful to me?**

Music is a very important part of everyone's life all around the world. Music has an important place in Irish heritage and culture. Most of us will take pleasure in listening to music and many will enjoy singing or playing an instrument throughout their lives. Some people decide to take up a career in music in areas such as Education, Business (Sound Engineer, Lyricist, Reviewer, Therapist) and Performance (Composer, Performer, Conductor).



## Visual Art

In Visual Art you will have the opportunity to create images and objects using a variety of tools, materials and special equipment. Art, Craft & Design is a practical subject where students learn completely by doing. Students develop their creativity, imagination and self-expression.

### **What will I learn about in Visual Art?**

In Art, Craft & Design, you will:

- \* Investigate by looking and recording your observations
- \* Learn a variety of new crafts
- \* Learn to work in 3-D e.g. construction, sculpture or clay work
- \* Learn about the design process and how it is used to create new design objects and images
- \* Learn to make links between your artwork and that of other artists, craft workers, architects and designers from different countries and historical periods

### **Is Visual Art anything like what I did in primary school?**

You have already been expressing your creative abilities through drawing, paint, colour, print, clay, construction, fabric and fibre in primary school. You will continue to build on these skills and you will also learn to use other tools, materials and special equipment to create images and objects. If you liked art in primary school then you will love Art, Craft & Design.

### **How will Visual Art be useful to me?**

There are many career opportunities in Visual Art in areas such as Photography, Illustration, Animation, Interior Design, Industrial Design, Fashion Design, Education and Architecture.





## **Religious Education**



In Religious Education (RE), you will learn about what people believe, why they believe and how these beliefs influence their own lives, the lives of others and the world around us. You will explore how many religions, particularly Christian religions, have shaped the Ireland that we live in today.

### **What will I learn about in Religious Education?**

Some of the things you will learn about include:

- \* Many of the major world religions
- \* How different communities of faith organise themselves: their leaders, celebrations, forms of worship, and guidelines about their members' behaviour
- \* The different religious and non-religious ways of trying to understand the world
- \* How religious beliefs shape some ideas and laws

### **Is learning Religious Education at post-primary anything like what I did in primary school?**

Different primary schools offer different kinds of religious education: you may have participated in an Ethics programme; your religious education may have taken place outside of primary school; or you may not have taken part in a religion class at all. You are still able to study Junior Cycle RE because you will use a lot of skills that you have learned already such as communicating your ideas, questioning, working in groups and finding out information using technology.

### **How will Religious Education be useful to me?**

Religious Education will help you to understand how people make decisions, how people are inspired by their religious beliefs, how conflict happens and how it can be solved. RE will help you to solve problems and think for yourself when working with others. It will guide your planning regarding planning or living in other countries. There are many courses at third level that involve Religious Education and Theology.

## Home Economics

Home Economics is relevant to everyone's present and future life. It teaches you important knowledge and skills which allows you to improve both you and your family's quality of life. You will learn in an active learning environment.

### **What will I learn about in Home Economics?**

- \* What food should be eaten to have a healthy diet
- \* How to prepare and cook nutritious dishes suitable for different diets e.g. Diet for someone with Type 1 diabetes/Sports person's diet
- \* The systems in the body and how to care for them e.g. The circulatory system – The Heart
- \* Analyse the relationships between people and society
- \* Study home design and interior design
- \* How to be a wise consumer, save money and examine marketing techniques
- \* How to be a more ethical and more involved in a sustainable world.
- \* Use your creative skills to create textile and craft pieces

### **How is Home Economics similar to what I studied in Primary School?**

You have learned about the body and how to care for it in SPHE and SESE (Science). The work you have created in Visual Arts will help in your design and craft classes. Maths will help when calculating costs, budgets and weighing ingredients.

### **How will Home Economics will be useful to me:**

Empowers you to make informed decisions when preparing food, looking after your diet and health, being able to manage money and resources. It develops your creative and analytical skills. Provides the foundation for study and working in areas of Nutritional Science, Health, Culinary and Hospitality Industry, Fashion and Design, Teaching, Social Work and Finance.



## **Business Studies**

Business Studies develops students' understanding of the everyday business of living. Students will gain an understanding of the world of work, running of businesses and completing accounts.



### **What will I learn about in Business Studies?**

- \* How to budget your money
- \* How to be a 'good consumer' and knowing your rights
- \* Important services including banking and insurance
- \* Enterprise: setting up businesses including the world of work and different types of businesses
- \* Marketing: sales promotions, advertising and branding
- \* Economics: unemployment, inflation, government budget and international trade
- \* Organising and recording financial information for businesses & households
- \* Communication skills of letter and report writing

### **Is learning Business Studies anything like what I did in primary school?**

Students are already exposed to key areas of business studies through the media, including employment news and retail sales levels. Work you did in English will help with reports and letter writing and work from maths will help with your calculations for budgets, savings and wages. Geography will help with the EU topic.

### **How will Business Studies be useful to me?**

Business Studies helps you to make decisions about spending and saving your money. You will learn about the world of work which will introduce you to many possible careers such as Accountancy, Finance and Sales, Marketing, Economics, and Management.

## **Wood Technology**

Wood Technology is one of the T4 subjects offered at Junior Cycle and was previously called 'Woodwork'. In Wood Technology you will learn to design small projects and develop the skills required to use tools and equipment safely to make your designs. You will work mainly with wood but also with other materials. You will also learn about wood as a material and how it is produced.

### **What will I learn about in Wood Technology?**

In Wood Technology you will learn include:

- \* How to design a project when given a brief description of what you are to make
- \* How to use the internet for research purposes
- \* How to use freehand sketching to communicate your ideas
- \* How to prepare a design drawing/plan of a project you design
- \* How to read design drawings and make small projects from these drawings
- \* How to safely use a range of hand and power tools in producing your design

### **Is Wood Technology anything like what I did in primary school?**

You will build upon the drawing work you did in Visual Art from your primary school experiences. You may already have learned about wood as a material and the environment as part of your work in SESE (Science and Geography). The skills you developed in mathematics and Science will also be very helpful in Wood Technology.

### **How will Wood Technology be useful to me?**

Studying Wood Technology for junior cycle can inspire a lifetime hobby and enjoyment of designing and building objects such as a piece of furniture or a child's toy. It can also inspire further study and lead to careers in areas such as Construction, Joinery, Architecture, Environmental Science and Design.



## **Engineering**

Engineering is one of the T4 subjects offered at Junior Cycle. It is an activity-based course focusing on the developing the students' awareness of engineering processes while developing the necessary subject knowledge with the disciplinary skills to engineer products.

Materials such as metal, plastics and wood are also investigated and used in project work. You will be working with basic electronic components too.

### **In Engineering you will learn:**

- \* Examine the properties of different metals, plastics and wood
- \* Examine simple mechanisms and 'how things work'
- \* Learn how to do freehand sketching
- \* Develop good craft skills using hand tools and machines in a safe way
- \* Learn many different methods of joining and assembling materials
- \* Learn how to apply a variety of decorative finishes to your project work
- \* Learn about basic electronic components and how to construct simple electrical circuits



### **Is Engineering anything like what I did in primary school?**

You will find that aspects of Maths you did in primary school will be useful to you, for example working out measurements from drawings. You will also have examined different materials in SESE: Science so you will be building on this knowledge.

### **How will Engineering be useful to me?**

You will be able to work with metals and other materials such as wood and plastic. You will be able to assemble these materials into useful and interesting items. You will know the most suitable finish to apply to your project and how to apply it.

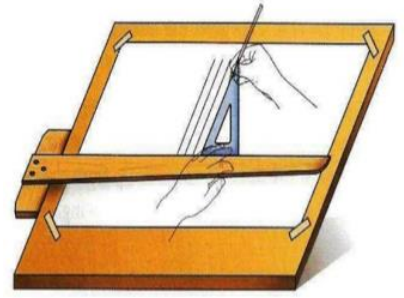
## Graphics

Graphics is one of the T4 subjects offered for JCSA. In Graphics you will learn how to represent 3-D objects on paper and on computer. You will develop problem solving and creative thinking skills through the solution of graphical problems.

### **What will I learn about in Graphics?**

In Graphics you will learn:

- \* How to produce drawings using drawing equipment, freehand sketches and computers
- \* How to read and interpret drawings and diagrams
- \* How graphics relate to the design and manufacture of products



### **Is Graphics anything like what I did in primary school?**

In primary school, you will have learned lots of things in mathematics which will help you in studying Graphics. For example, you will have learned about 2-D and 3-D shapes, lines and angles. In Visual Arts, you will have made drawings, experimented with lines, shapes, textures, patterns and tones. All of these previous learning experiences and skills will be helpful in Technical Graphics. However, your Graphics teacher will start with the basic skills required and you will develop them throughout the coursework.

### **How will Graphics be useful to me?**

Graphics helps you to think in a more logical and creative way. You will communicate information using diagrams and sketches. Graphics greatly compliments the other technology subjects and lead to careers in areas such as Architecture and Engineering.

## **Applied Technology**

Applied Technology is one of the T4 subjects offered for Junior Certificate. Applied Technology is mainly about using a design process to solve technological problems. In Applied Technology, you will use the design process to work through a task or problem in order to arrive at a solution, which is usually in the form of an artefact or finished product. You will learn how to safely use the tools, materials and equipment necessary to make this product.

### **In Applied Technology you will learn:**

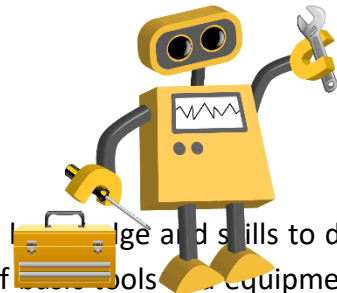
- \* An understanding and appreciation of design and the design process
- \* How to use the tools and equipment necessary to complete projects in a safe manner
- \* An understanding of different materials, their properties and how best to work with these materials, i.e. Wood, metals and plastics
- \* How to use electronic components to build simple circuits for use in tasks and projects e.g Running mechanical toys
- \* Investigate the role of technology in the world we live in
- \* Learn how to identify a range of different materials and their properties
- \* Use the design process to find a technological solution to a problem

### **Is Applied Technology anything like what I did in primary school?**

Applied Technology you will build upon some of the work you did in Maths in primary school, i.e. in Applied Technology you will be working out problems and reading measurements on drawings. You will also be able to use many of the things you learned in Science in primary school. For example, you will have learned about various materials and where they are used.

### **How will Applied Technology be useful to me?**

Applied Technology will help you to solve many technological problems you may experience in your everyday life. This subject teaches you to think about a problem and then use your knowledge and skills to design a solution to that problem. It will also teach you skills in the use of tools and equipment. You will also be able to identify many different types of materials and have a basic understanding of electronic circuits and gear systems.



## **Civic, Social & Political Education**

Civic, Social and Political Education is commonly called CSPE. It aims to help students to become involved in their community, country and the wider world. It gives students an appreciation for national and international government structures and issues.

### **What will I learn about in CSPE?**

In CSPE class you will get a chance to think about questions such as:

- \* What does it mean to be an active citizen?
- \* How can I get involved in my community?
- \* How can I make a difference?
- \* What are human rights?
- \* How can I play a part in protecting the environment?

However, CSPE is more than just theory as it involves taking action in the form of a group project.

### **Is CSPE anything like what I did in primary school?**

CSPE follows on from what you learned about in 'Myself and the Wider World' in Social, Personal and Health Education. It will also build on what you learned about in 'Environmental Awareness and Care' in the subjects Geography and Science within SESE.

### **How will CSPE be useful to me?**

You will find CSPE useful if you want to study politics, sociology or many other courses. You will also find it useful in your everyday life and as a citizen as it helps you to understand your community, society and the wider world.





## Social, Political & Health Education

Social, Political and Health Education is commonly shortened to SPHE. In Social, Political & Health Education you will learn about what might help you to make choices for a confident and healthy life. In SPHE class, you will learn how to get on with your classmates and how to help each other to be healthy, safe and well.

### **What will I learn about in SPHE?**

Some of the things that you will learn about in SPHE include:

- \* How to settle into your new school and into your new class
- \* How to make friends with new people in your class
- \* Where to go and what to do if you need help or advice in your new school
- \* What it means to make healthy choices about such things as smoking, alcohol, being active
- \* How to form healthy, close relationships and to understand human sexuality



### **Is SPHE anything like what I did in primary school?**

In primary school SPHE, you learned about yourself (taking care of your body, growing and changing, minding yourself) and about the main relationships in your life (with yourself, your friends and your family). You also learned about yourself and the wider world (citizenship and media). Junior Cycle SPHE will be very similar but will relate to being a teenager and preparation for adulthood.

### **How will SPHE be useful to me?**

SPHE will help you to personally develop into a confident, healthy, caring adult who tries to understand others better and can work as part of a group. This will help you no matter what course you study or area of work



## **Physical Education**

Physical Education (PE) is a subject where you take part in and learn about physical activities. You learn about how important keeping fit is for the health of your body and mind. In some activities you work on your own and in others you work with your classmates as part of a team.

### **What will I learn about in PE?**

Some of the things you will learn about in PE will include:

- \* How to take part in many activities including reading maps for orienteering to doing gymnastics with a partner in class
- \* How to be part of a team, to have fun and to try new activities
- \* Living a healthy lifestyle, good nutrition and the importance of physical activity.

### **Is PE anything like what I did in primary school?**

You have been taking part in Physical Education in primary school which has provided you with learning opportunities in athletics, dance, gymnastics, games, outdoor and adventure activities, and aquatics. In junior cycle, many of the games and activities will be the same. You will get the opportunity to further improve your skills and to appreciate how important physical activity is for you.

### **How will PE be useful to me?**

You may already have an interest in studying sport, physical education, leisure or recreation on third level when you leave post-primary school. By taking part on Physical Education, you will learn activities that you can enjoy outside of class and when you are older. Physical Education will hopefully inspire you to lead a healthy lifestyle, to try new things and to work well as part of a team.



## **Guidance & Counselling**

Scoil Dara offer a comprehensive guidance & counselling service to our students. We aspire to create a safe, caring and supportive environment in which to assist our students make informed choices in the personal, social educational and vocational areas of their lives.

Working with the pastoral care team of Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads, & Learning Support Team we keep a very close eye on all 1<sup>st</sup> years to ensure their smooth transition from Primary to Secondary School. Our Guidance Counsellors are always willing to meet with parents and students to discuss any concerns you may have.

Our Guidance Counsellors will attend the 1<sup>st</sup> year parent teacher meeting and will host a subject choice information for parents once all subjects have been sampled by our students.

We will continue to work closely with parents and students throughout your Junior & Senior Cycle in Scoil Dara providing a service using 3 categories which are separate but very much interlinked:

- \* Personal / Social Guidance & Counselling
- \* Educational Guidance & Counselling
- \* Career / Vocational Guidance & Counselling