

St Oliver Post Primary School

Choosing the Right Options at Junior Cycle



Information Booklet

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General Introduction

Parents and Guardians

We are conscious that the transition of your child from primary to post-primary education marks another milestone in your child's development. As you help your child through this transition, it is natural to feel a degree of anxiety and concern at the challenges before them.

We hope that you will find this booklet informative and worthwhile, and that we will address any concerns that you may have regarding subject choices.

Your son/daughter will study the core subjects. These are Irish, English, Mathematics, French, History, Geography, CSPE, Religion, SPHE, IT and Physical Education plus three other optional subjects. All optional subjects are enclosed in this booklet.

For more information about any of the subjects in this booklet click on www.curriculumonline.ie.

Principal: Mr. M. O'Reilly

Mission Statement of St Oliver Post Primary School

St. Oliver Post Primary School is committed to quality education. It seeks to enrich students' lives and empower them for life's many challenges. This is done in a caring atmosphere of good order and discipline and in partnership with parents.

In our daily life we value the principles of justice, mutual respect, equality and tolerance leading to promotion of a positive self-image and the confidence to achieve the highest levels.

The Junior Certificate

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.

The Junior Certificate programme is designed to meet the needs of all students in second level education.

The Junior Certificate Programme aims to:

- Reinforce and further develop a young person's knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at primary level.
- Extend and deepen a young person's educational experience.
- Prepare the young person for the requirements for their programmes of study, of employment or for life outside full-time education.
- Contribute to the moral and spiritual development of the young person and to develop a tolerance and respect for the values and beliefs of others.
- Prepare the young person for the responsibilities of citizenship, in the national context, and in the context of the wider European and global communities.

The Junior Certificate Programme is based on the following principles:

Breadth and Balance

At this stage of their school careers, all students should have a wide range of educational experiences. Particular attention must be given to reinforcing and developing the skills of numeracy and literacy. Particular attention should also be given to social and environmental education, science and technology and modern languages.

Relevance

Curriculum provision should address the immediate and prospective needs of the young person.

Quality

Every young person should be challenged to achieve the highest possible standards of excellence, with due regard to different aptitudes and abilities and to international comparisons.

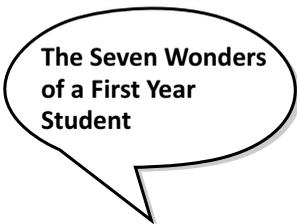
Choosing the Right Option for you

Identify the subjects/options that you think might suit you best and justify your choices.

- Are you good with your hands?
- Do you like drawing/painting?
- Do you really enjoy mathematics?
- Are you neat and careful?
- Are you logical and methodical?

At this stage in a young person's life it is best not to specialise, but choose a range of subjects from different groups.

Exam Subjects	Non-Exam Subjects
Mathematics	SPHE
English	Religion
Irish	Physical Education
French	I.T.
Science	
Music	
Home Economics	
Business Studies	
Art, Craft & Design	
Technical Graphics	
Metalwork	
Wood Technology	
History	
Geography	
CSPE	



**The Seven Wonders
of a First Year
Student**

1. The subject looks easy I wonder should I do it?
2. I wonder is that subject only for swots?
3. I wonder am I good enough to do the subject?
4. I wonder will I be made fun of if I do the subject?
5. I wonder if any of my friends are doing the subject?
6. I don't really like the subject but I wonder should I do it to get into a course at college?
7. I wonder if that subject is for girls or boys?

Art, Craft and Design

In Art, Craft and Design you will have the opportunity to create



images and objects using a variety of tools, materials and special equipment.

to understand Art, Craft and Design it is important to make things yourself so that you learn and understand by doing.

What will I learn in Art, Craft, and Design?

In Art, Craft and Design you will:

- investigate by looking and recording your observations and experiences.
- 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 to use it 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 learning Art, Craft and Design 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.

How will Art, Craft and Design be useful to me?

There are many career opportunities in Art, Craft and Design - areas such as: Photography, Illustration, Interior/Industrial/Fashion Design, Education and Architecture.

Business Studies



Business Studies helps you to make more informed decisions in the everyday business of living. It gives you a better understanding of the world of work. It encourages you to think about how and why people start up in business and why you too might also consider starting a business.

What will I learn in Business Studies?

- good communication skills such as letter writing and report writing.
- how to collect, organise and record financial information for yourself, your family, for clubs you may be a member of, and for businesses you may be employed with in the future.
- what your rights and responsibilities are as a consumer (someone who buys or uses goods and services - that's you!).
how to calculate your wages when you start working (including the minimum wage).
- about why our membership of the European Union is so important to our economy.

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

The work you did in English will be a good help to you in letter and report writing. Your Mathematics skills will help you to calculate wages, exchange rates, interest on savings and the cost of loans. Your knowledge of Ireland and the European Union from Geography (SESE) will also be of use to you in Business Studies.

How will Business Studies be useful to me?

Business Studies helps you to make wise decisions about saving and spending your money now and throughout your life. You will learn about the world of work which will introduce you to many possible careers such as: Accountancy, Finance, Sales, Marketing, and Management. It also gives you a good foundation for the three Leaving Certificate business subjects.

Home Economics

Home Economics is a subject where you will learn how to take care of yourself, others, your home and your environment. As Home Economics is a very practical subject, you will carry out a lot of activities in school and at home.



What will I learn in Home Economics?

Some of the things you will learn about are:

- your body - what is good to eat and how to keep healthy.
- food - how it nourishes your body, how to choose it, store it, and how to prepare and cook it.
- using money - how to spend it wisely, how to save it, and how you are protected as a consumer.
- your home - about design in the home, about safety and hygiene.
- design and craftwork, child development, textiles you will carry out a project in one of these areas.

Is learning Home Economics anything like what I did in primary school?

In SPHE and SESE: Science you will have learnt about your body, how to care for it and the correct foods to eat. You will have made some items in Visual Arts which will be useful when you start sewing in class. You will have weighed and measured items and materials in Mathematics. You will have studied topics related to the family in SESE (History, Geography and Science).

How will Home Economics be useful to me?

You will be able to use information you have studied in your everyday life; from looking after yourself, to shopping and caring for others. You will be more experienced at managing your resources and your time. There are many jobs and careers that you can work in, e.g. Chefs/Cooks, Catering, Fashion and Textiles, Child Care, Teaching, Food Industry, Tourism, Health and Nutrition.

Metalwork



Metalwork is one of the technology subjects offered at junior cycle. It is an activity-based course focusing on metal, how to work with it and how to assemble different parts. Other materials such as plastics and wood are also investigated and used in project work. You will be working with basic electronic components too.

What will I learn in Metalwork?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to read and follow a technical drawing.
skills in shaping, cutting and joining materials.
- how to use a wide variety of tools and machines correctly and safely.
- the properties of different metals and how they are made.
- the importance of metal in our everyday lives.
- how to use the internet in your research.

Is learning Metalwork 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 Metalwork 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.

Music

Music is an important part of everyone's life. In Junior Certificate Music, you will sing and possibly learn how to play an instrument. You will listen to many types of music such as pop, classical and traditional Irish music. You will also start composing.



What will I learn in Music?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- about many types of music.
- how to read and write music.
- how to sing songs and maybe how to play an instrument.
- also, your school may have a choir or orchestra, which you might like to join.

Is learning Music anything like what I did in primary school?

In Music in primary school, you may have been part of a school choir and/or school Music group or orchestra.

There, you started listening to, performing and composing music.

In Junior Certificate Music you will become even better at these skills.

How will Music be useful to me?

Music has a very important part in many peoples' lives. Most of us will take pleasure in listening to music and many people will enjoy singing or playing an instrument throughout their lives. Some people may even decide to take up a career in music in areas such as Education (Teacher, Lecturer), Business (Sound Engineer, Lyricist, Reviewer, Therapist) and Performance (Composer, Performer, Conductor).

Science



We come across science in everyday things in the world around us, both living and non-living. Studying Science in school can help you to understand the importance of science in our lives and in the environment.

What will I learn in Science?

The Science course covers the three sciences Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Biology is the science of living things. You will learn about:

- plants and animals including humans.
- the environment and how to care for it.

Chemistry deals with the composition of substances and their properties. You will learn about:

- the materials that make up the world around us
- how materials can change and be changed.

Physics is the science of matter and energy and how they interact. You will learn about:

- forces and energy.
- how things work.

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 care for the environment. You also explored the world around you and learned to work like a scientist. In Junior Certificate Science you will use and develop these science skills.

How will Science be useful 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 use to you in whatever job you choose to do. In third level there are many different types of science courses on offer and many different careers open to science students. These include becoming a: Pharmacist, Radiographer, Doctor, Dentist, Technician, Psychologist, Astronomer, Teacher, Vet and Researcher.

Technical Graphics



Technical Graphics is one of the technology subjects offered at junior cycle. In Technical 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 in Technical Graphics?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- 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 learning Technical Graphics anything like what I did in primary school?

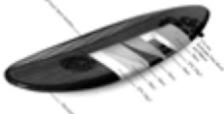
You will have learned and done lots of things in mathematics which will be built on in Technical Graphics. For example, you will have learned about 2-D and 3-D shapes, and lines and angles. In Visual Arts, you will have made drawings, experimented with lines, shapes and textures, patterns and tones.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

How will Technical Graphics be useful to me?

Technical Graphics helps you to think in a more logical and creative way. You will be able to communicate information using diagrams and sketches. You will have learned how to present information in a neat and organised fashion. This subject will be of use to you if you want to progress into career areas such as Architecture or Engineering.

Wood Technology

Wood Technology is one of the technology subjects offered at junior cycle. You will learn to design small projects and the skills required to use tools and equipment to make your designs. You will work mainly with wood but also with other materials. You will learn about wood as a material and how it is produced.



What will I learn in Wood Technology?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to design a project 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 learning Wood Technology anything like what I did in primary school?

You will be building upon the drawing work you did in Visual Arts. You may already have learned a lot about wood as a material as part of your work in Science. You may also have learned about trees as part of the natural environment and as a habitat in both Geography and Science. The skills you developed when designing and making things in Science will also be very helpful in Wood Technology. You will also use your mathematical skills quite a lot.

How will Wood Technology be useful to me?

- You will know the correct procedures to follow when developing an idea into a finished artefact e.g. a piece of furniture or a child's toy etc.
- You will be able to identify different trees, recognise their importance to us and our environment.
- You will also have the skills to make objects from wood and know how to apply appropriate finishes, e.g. paint, varnish, stain or polish.

Irish

The aim of Junior Certificate Irish is to improve your ability to



communicate through Irish. You will focus on improving your language skills through concentrating on four areas; your spoken

language through speaking; your listening skills through listening to others, CDs and tapes; your written skills through writing in Irish, and your reading skills 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 through Irish.
- how to use the Irish that you already have and add to it.
- how to develop your skills in listening, reading, and speaking in Irish.
- how to write letters, postcards, essays, and stories in Irish.

Is learning Irish anything like what I did in primary school?

Of course learning Irish is similar to what you have already learned. You will build on the many activities you have carried out in primary school such as creative writing, talking 'as Gaeilge' in pairs and in groups, listening to radio clips, watching TV clips and reading from a range of Irish poems and stories. All of the Irish you have learned so far will be of great help to you in Junior Certificate Irish.

How will Irish be useful to me?

You will have the advantage of being bilingual. Irish is one of our official languages as well as being an official language of the European Union. Careers in which you may develop and use your Irish language skills include; Teaching, working as Civil Servants, careers in Business, Law, Communication, and Translation Services.

English



English is an international language spoken or being learned by people in almost every part of the world. In Junior Certificate English you will learn how to communicate more effectively with others and to express your point of view in many different ways. You will also have many opportunities to use your imagination and to find out about great writers. By the end of the Junior Certificate course, you should be better able to understand your world and to say what you think about it.

What will I learn in English?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to communicate clearly.
- how to speak and write in interesting ways about things that happen in your daily life.
- how to explore different ways of using English e.g. Interviewing, storytelling, describing, newspaper reporting , writing advertisements or jokes etc.
- how to find out about the great writers of Ireland and the world, 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. You will do similar work and you will continue to gain confidence in speaking, reading and writing in English. As in primary school, learning English will help you to develop as a person. You will continue to learn about the wonderful power of words and to develop your imagination.

How will English be useful to me?

You can continue to improve your English all your life. The better you are at English the more you are likely to enjoy speaking, reading and writing. Any third level course in English provides you with skills for a variety of positions in Business, Government, Research, Education, Publishing, as well as in the Cultural, Entertainment, and Communications Industries.

Mathematics

In Mathematics, you will develop your problem-solving skills and your ability to present logical arguments. You will be better able to use what you learned in Mathematics in real life situations in everyday life and work.



What will I learn in Mathematics?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- sets.
- number systems.
- algebra.
- functions and graphs.
- trigonometry.
- geometry.
- statistics.
- applied arithmetic and measure.

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

You will already have learned about number, algebra, shape and space, measures and data in mathematics in primary school. Junior Certificate Mathematics aims to build on this. Many Junior Certificate Mathematics teachers use practical work and real-life materials in their classrooms. Students often take part in investigations and project work. This is similar to the way you learnt Mathematics in primary school.

How will Mathematics be useful to me?

Studying mathematics prepares you for business calculations, for handling your money sensibly and for courses in Sciences, Engineering and Technology. You should see mathematics as an opportunity to strengthen your thinking skills.

French



In learning French you will begin to understand what you read, hear, talk and write.

What will I learn in French?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to speak in the language about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, your school, etc. This will help you to talk to people who speak the language.
- the skills of listening to, reading and writing in the language.
- the grammar of the language.
information about the countries where people speak the language, and their way of life.

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

You may have been learning English, Irish, or even a modern language already, so you already know a lot about learning how languages work. This will be of great help to you as you make comparisons between the languages. It may also help you to guess the meanings of words and phrases in the new language you are learning.

How will a modern language be useful to me?

You will find modern languages useful in your personal life for travelling and in many careers including Tourism, Catering, Education, Business and Translation Services.

History

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



What will I learn in History?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how people have lived during different periods.
 - how we find out about the past.
 - how important changes took place during different periods, what caused the changes and how people were affected by the changes.
- abroad understanding of local, Irish and international history.

Is learning History anything like what I did in primary school?

In SESE: History, in primary school, you developed your knowledge and understanding of people, events and developments in the past. Junior Certificate History continues to build on these areas.

How will History be useful to me?

It will help you to better understand the world in which you 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

In Geography you will study about places, people and what shapes the environment. You will learn how the environment influences people, and how they change the environment. You will develop your ability to draw and understand maps, graphs and diagrams, as well as studying photographs and collecting information outside the classroom through fieldwork.



What will I learn in Geography?

Some of the things you will learn 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, DVDs and the Internet.

Is learning Geography anything like what I did in primary school?

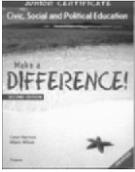
In primary school, you have studied Geography as part of SESE. You have also learned about many geographical ideas through studying the local, national and global environment.

Junior Certificate Geography builds on these geographical ideas.

How will Geography be useful to me?

Everybody uses geography in their daily lives. When you think of where to go on holiday or wonder what tomorrow's weather will be like, you are thinking geography. When you look at an atlas map, or a town plan, or a weather map, you use what we learn in Geography. Geography prepares you for careers in Town Planning, Outdoor Pursuits Education, weather forecasting, Tourism and Transport. Geography keeps you informed of topics which arise in conversation, current affairs, newspaper reports, and on TV, such as climate change, renewable energy and aid to poorer nations.

CSPE



Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) is taught to all Junior Certificate students. It aims to help you to become actively involved in your community, your country and the wider world.

What will I learn 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?

But you will do more than just thinking about these things .You will be taking action!

Is learning CSPE anything like what I did in primary school?

CSPE will build on what you learned about 'Myself and the Wider World' in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE). It will also build on what you learned about '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 or sociology or many other courses. You will also find it useful in your everyday life as it helps you to understand your community, society, the wider world.

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 you live in today.

What will I learn in Religious Education?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- about at least one of the major world religions in detail.
- 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 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 been separate from school; or you may not have taken part in a religion class yet. You will still be able to study Junior Certificate RE because you will use a lot of the things 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?

RE will be useful to you in:

- helping you understand how people make decisions, how people are inspired by their religious beliefs, how conflict happens and how it can be solved.
- helping you solve problems and thinking for yourself when working with others.
- planning to travel to or live in other countries. You can also continue studying RE as part of some courses and degrees.

SPHE

In Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) you 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 better, as well as help each other to be healthy, safe and well.



What will I learn in SPHE?

Some of the things you will learn 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, healthy eating and being active.
- how to form healthy, close relationships, and to understand human sexuality.

Is learning SPHE anything like what I did in primary school?

In SPHE in primary school, you have been learning about yourself (taking care of your body, growing and changing, safety and protection), about yourself and others (your family, friends and relationships), and about yourself and the wider world (citizenship and media). Some of the activities in SPHE may be the same, e.g. circle time. You will now be learning about what you can do to be a healthier teenager.

How will SPHE be useful to me?

By taking part in SPHE class you will learn how:

- to work in a group
- to make healthier choices
- to be more confident about yourself
- to understand others better.

No matter what you do when you leave school, being able to make healthy choices for yourself and being able to communicate well with others will be important for your well-being.

Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) is a subject where you can 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 in PE?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to take part in many activities, from reading maps in orienteering to doing gymnastics with a partner.
- how to be part of a team, but also fun activities which you can do on your own.
- why physical activity is good for you.

Is learning Physical Education 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 realise how important physical activity is for you.

How will Physical Education be useful to me?

You may wish to study sport, physical education, or leisure and recreation in third level courses when you leave school. By taking part in Physical Education, you will:

- learn activities that you can enjoy outside of class and when you are older.
- learn about physical activities which will help you have a healthy lifestyle.



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