



# **Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel**

## **Junior Certificate School Programme Policy**

### **School Year 2026–2027**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Junior Certificate School Programme is a national Department of Education programme which complements Junior Cycle. It provides a flexible and inclusive framework to support students who may benefit from additional structures to promote engagement, participation, achievement, attendance and retention.

Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel is committed to offering students a holistic Catholic education in a caring environment conducive to learning and personal development. In keeping with our CEIST ethos, the JCSP will support students to experience success, build confidence, develop key skills and remain positively connected to school life.

The programme will operate as part of the school's wider Junior Cycle provision and will support inclusive, differentiated and student-centred learning. It will be implemented through subject-specific learning statements, cross-curricular initiatives, literacy and numeracy supports, wellbeing activities, profiling, celebration of achievement and ongoing monitoring of student progress.

#### **2. Rationale**

The introduction and development of JCSP in Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel is grounded in the following priorities:

##### ***2.1 Promoting equity and inclusion***

JCSP supports the school's commitment to inclusion by ensuring that students who may experience barriers to learning, attendance or participation are provided with structured opportunities to succeed. The programme recognises that students learn in different ways and that targeted supports can increase confidence, motivation and engagement.

##### ***2.2 Supporting attendance, engagement and retention***

The programme will support the school's ANSEO attendance priorities for 2026–2027. It will promote positive attendance through active learning, achievable targets, recognition of progress, practical initiatives and strong links between students, teachers, parents/guardians and school leadership. This aligns with the school's existing attendance strategy, which identifies regular attendance as essential for academic success, personal development and future opportunities.

##### ***2.3 Developing key skills***



JCSP will support the development of literacy, numeracy, communication, personal, social and learning-to-learn skills. Oide describes JCSP as helping to bridge the gap for students who struggle to engage with learning at Junior Cycle, while also supporting retention and strong learning foundations.

### ***2.4 Recognising achievement***

A central feature of JCSP is the recognition and celebration of student progress. Through statements, profiling, certificates, postcards, classroom feedback and celebration events, students will be supported to see themselves as capable learners. This will contribute to improved self-esteem, motivation and belonging.

## **3. Aims of JCSP in Presentation Secondary School**

The aims of JCSP in Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel are to:

1. Support targeted students to engage positively with Junior Cycle.
2. Improve attendance, participation and retention.
3. Strengthen literacy, numeracy, communication and key learning skills.
4. Promote active, practical and differentiated approaches to teaching and learning.
5. Build student confidence, self-esteem and sense of belonging.
6. Recognise and celebrate achievement through JCSP profiling and certification.
7. Support collaboration between teachers, school leadership, parents/guardians and students.
8. Contribute to the school's wider inclusion, wellbeing and attendance priorities.

## **4. Student Selection and Participation**

JCSP in Presentation Secondary School will be implemented using a whole-school inclusive approach together with a targeted JCSP cohort.

In response to data gathered through the school's SSE three-year cycle, which identifies chronic absenteeism as a significant barrier to student engagement, participation and progression, all 1st Year and 2nd Year students will be registered in the Junior Certificate School Programme for 2026–2027 as part of a whole-school, preventative approach to improving attendance, strengthening inclusion and supporting successful completion of Junior Cycle.

### ***4.1 Key selection criteria***

For the 2026–2027 school year, the two key local criteria for identifying students for targeted JCSP support will be:

- A record of, or concern regarding, poor attendance or risk of disengagement.



- Difficulties with social interaction, belonging or inclusion.

#### **4.2 Additional indicators**

The following additional indicators may also be considered:

- Low academic performance or repeated experiences of difficulty in learning.
- Difficulties with literacy and/or numeracy.
- Low confidence or low self-esteem.
- Concerns arising from transition information from primary school.
- Results from entrance assessments or diagnostic testing.
- Behavioural, emotional or social needs affecting engagement with school.
- Information from parents/guardians, students, Year Heads, the SEN team, Guidance, primary schools or relevant support personnel.

Selection will be evidence-informed, student-centred and respectful of the dignity and privacy of each student.

### **5. Selection Process**

The JCSP selection process will be overseen by the Core JCSP Team, comprising:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- JCSP Co-ordinator
- Relevant Year Head
- Head of Junior Students
- SEN/ASD Lead Teacher, where relevant
- Guidance Counsellor, where appropriate

The process will include review of relevant data, including attendance patterns, transition information, assessment data, teacher observations, pastoral care information and parental/student input where appropriate.

The final list of registered JCSP students will be shared only with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis to support planning, teaching, learning, profiling and student support.

### **6. Curriculum Provision**



JCSP students will follow the Junior Cycle curriculum. JCSP does not replace Junior Cycle; rather, it provides an additional framework to support students in accessing, engaging with and succeeding in Junior Cycle.

Most students will remain in mainstream mixed-ability class settings. Some students may access smaller-group support, including during timetabled Irish periods where a student has an Irish exemption. Limited withdrawal may occur for targeted interventions, provided that it is purposeful, time-bound and in the student's best educational interest.

JCSP will be embedded across subjects through:

- Subject-specific statements.
- Cross-curricular statements.
- Literacy and numeracy initiatives.
- Wellbeing and attendance-focused initiatives.
- Active and practical learning experiences.
- Regular profiling and reflection.
- Celebration of progress and achievement.

## **7. Proposed JCSP Initiatives 2026–2027**

The following initiatives are proposed for the 2026–2027 school year:

- School-based literacy and/or numeracy initiative.
- Reading challenge.
- Subject-specific initiatives in areas such as Geography, Science, Biodiversity, History, Art, Home Economics, Music, Art and Horticulture.
- Field trips or practical learning activities linked to Junior Cycle learning outcomes.
- Wellbeing initiative, such as Being Active, Being Responsible or Staying Connected, with a particular focus on attendance and belonging.
- Christmas and summer celebration events.
- JCSP postcards, certificates and other forms of recognition.
- Recording of relevant achievements in the Other Areas of Learning section of the JCPA, where appropriate.

The JCSP Co-ordinator will apply for JCSP initiatives and resources through the relevant Oide/JCSP systems and will liaise with subject teachers regarding implementation and evaluation.



## **8. Organisation and Co-ordination**

The Principal, Deputy Principal, JCSP Co-ordinator and JCSP teaching team will meet at the beginning of the school year to plan programme implementation. The JCSP Co-ordinator will chair meetings, set agendas and share minutes with relevant staff.

Additional meetings may be arranged during the year to support initiatives, profiling, review and planning. The JCSP Co-ordinator will liaise regularly with school management, subject departments, Year Heads, SEN personnel and initiative teams.

Staff will receive JCSP updates through staff meetings, the Friday Flyer, MS Teams and other agreed communication channels.

New teachers will be introduced to JCSP by the JCSP Co-ordinator. A TeachMeet or refresher session may be provided for new staff and for any staff member seeking further support. Oide professional learning will also be promoted where available.

## **9. Profiling and Assessment**

JCSP profiling will be used as a formative process to support student progress and achievement. Teachers, in consultation with their subject departments, will select appropriate subject statements for JCSP students.

Statements will be used to:

- Clarify learning targets.
- Support assessment for learning.
- Track student progress.
- Encourage reflection.
- Recognise achievement.
- Promote student confidence and ownership of learning.

Teachers are encouraged to complete statements with students where appropriate. This may support student reflection and help students recognise their progress at the end of a unit of learning.

Physical JCSP Profile Folders will be stored securely and made available to teachers and students as required.

Final profiling will take place in 3rd Year, normally in March, using MS Teams or another agreed system. Subject teachers will submit completed statements to the JCSP Co-ordinator. Cross-curricular statements will be discussed and awarded by relevant teachers, initiative teams, the Head of Junior Students and/or the ASD Lead Teacher, as appropriate.

A Final Profile Celebration will take place in Term 3. Students will receive their Junior Certificate School Programme Student Profile, including certification of participation and a



record of statements achieved. JCSP participation and achievements may also be recorded in the Other Areas of Learning section of the JCPA where appropriate.

JCSP students will sit the same Junior Cycle examinations as other students, as set by the State Examinations Commission.

## **10. Communication with Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians will be informed and involved through a range of formal and informal communication methods, including:

- Pre-1st Year meetings.
- School reports.
- Parent-teacher meetings.
- VS-Mail notifications.
- Permission slips and updates.
- Attendance texts.
- JCSP postcards.
- Personal invitations to celebrations.
- School newsletter and social media, where appropriate.

Parental engagement will be encouraged as an important part of supporting attendance, confidence, learning and retention.

## **11. Links with Other School Policies and Supports**

This JCSP proposal should be read in conjunction with relevant school policies and plans, including:

- Statement of Strategy for School Attendance.
- Whole School Guidance Plan.
- Code of Behaviour.
- SPHE/RSE Policy.
- SEN and Inclusion supports.
- Admissions Policy.
- Bí Cineálta / Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Child Safeguarding Statement.



The Whole School Guidance Plan already identifies the importance of developmental supports, transition planning, assessment, pastoral support, SEN provision, EAL support, student support structures and guidance for students across all year groups.

## **12. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The JCSP will be reviewed annually. Evaluation will include:

- Review of attendance data.
- Review of student engagement and participation.
- Feedback from students.
- Feedback from teachers and initiative leaders.
- Feedback from parents/guardians where appropriate.
- Review of profiling and statement completion.
- Review of the impact of literacy, numeracy and wellbeing initiatives.
- Recommendations for future planning.

Each JCSP initiative will be evaluated after completion by the lead teacher and/or JCSP Co-ordinator. Findings will inform planning for the following year.

## **13. Success Criteria**

The programme will be considered effective where there is evidence of:

- Improved or stabilised attendance among targeted students.
- Increased engagement in learning.
- Improved confidence and self-esteem.
- Completion of subject and cross-curricular statements.
- Active participation in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing initiatives.
- Positive student, teacher and parent feedback.
- Successful completion of the JCSP Profile.
- Positive progression through Junior Cycle.

## **14. Review**



This policy/proposal will be reviewed annually by the JCSP Co-ordinator, school management and relevant members of the JCSP team. The next review will take place in Term 3 of the 2026–2027 school year.

### 15. Ratification

This JCSP Policy / Proposal was presented to the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel for consideration.

**Date presented:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date ratified:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

Chairperson, Board of Management

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**Signed:**

Principal

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