**Ramsgrange Community School**

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**Subject Choice Policy**

**April 2017**

**Ratified by the Board of Management on : May 2nd 2017**

**Mission Statement**

Ramsgrange Community School is a co-educational and non-denominational school. We are a welcoming, open and inclusive school. Our aim is to develop each of our students as a whole person by promoting an atmosphere of respect, honesty and fairness in which all the school community can achieve their full potential. Our school’s vision centres on the values of Respect, Community and Success.

**Other relevant policies**

Admissions Policy

Transition Year Admissions Policy

Leaving Certificate Applied Admissions Policy

Assessment and change of level policy

**Overview of process**

The process of ‘choosing subjects’ begins in December annually. All students in third year complete DATS (Differential Aptitude Tests) and meet with the Guidance Counsellor to discuss results prior to subject choices. Third year/ Transition Year students also receive a presentation from subject teachers and programme co-ordinators.

The Guidance Counsellor will meet with students in order to help students make choices for Junior Cert subjects and Leaving Cert subjects on an individual basis if requested.

Parents will also be informed on subject choice in the following ways:

Parents will attend an information evening explaining the process in early March. Parents will also have an opportunity to discuss subjects at Parent/Teacher meeting in February. Parents can also speak to the Guidance Counsellor individually if they so wish.

Subject bands are created annually from student preferences. Every effort is made to meet the preferences of students; however there will always be situations where preferences cannot be met within the subject bands. Subjects and programmes offered each year are very much dependent on DES teacher allocation.

**Second Year Subject Choices:**

All students study the core subjects Mathematics, Irish, English, History and Geography as well as other compulsory subjects CSPE, PE and SPHE.

Students then select three subjects from the following list of subjects (the provision of these subjects is dependent on DES allocation): Art, Materials Technology Wood, Materials Technology Metal, Technical Graphics, Home Economics, Business, French/German, Science and Music.

Students will then receive a preference form similar to the one in appendix 1A. Students are advised to speak with subject teachers before making any decision. There will be a Parent Teacher Meeting in February where parents will have an opportunity to speak with individual teachers. Principal and Deputy Principal create bands based on student preferences using the ‘Options’ programme in VSWare. The school does not guarantee that all subjects will run, this is based on both DES allocation and demand.

Students will be informed of their subject options during April. Timetabling then begins. Classes are created based on student’s subject choice. Timetabling will continue throughout the summer months. The process of subject choice, banding and timetabling is a very rigorous and time-consuming progress and thus there is no scope for change of subjects after the deadline set.

**Oversubscription of subjects:**

If a situation arises that a subject is over-subscribed, then the following criteria will apply:

1. Student Preferences
2. Lottery

**Fifth Year Subject Choice Subject choice**:

All students study the core subjects Irish, English, Maths, Religion/RSE (Relationship and Sexuality Education), Guidance, LCVP (Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme), PE. Students then select four subjects in order of preference from the following optional subjects (the provision of these subjects is dependent on DES allocation): Art, Engineering, Construction studies, Design and Communication Graphics, Home Economics, History, Geography, French, Business, Accounting, Economics, Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

The availability of subjects will be based on Department of Education and Skills allocation and demand.

**Choosing Subjects:**

When choosing Leaving Cert subjects great care must be taken as the choice of subjects made now may determine 3rd level and career options in two years’ time.

* Be aware of Minimum entry requirements and specific course requirements for 3rd level.(Check out www.qualifax.ie and www.careersportal.ie)
* Identify the subjects you like—it is easier to work on something you enjoy. Note subjects you are good at.
* Ask your subject teachers for advice.
* If uncertain about your future career, choose a balance of subjects to keep options open.
* Talk about options to your parents, guidance counsellor, and Leaving Certificate students.
* Look at text books of subjects, exam papers and websites.

A 5th year options talk for parents will be held in RCS annually.

Subject bands will be created based on student preferences and demand. Students will be informed of their chosen subjects in April. The creation of classes and timetabling then begins by the Principal. Classes are created based on students’ subject choice. (Subjects may not be offered if there is insufficient demand or Department of Education and Skills allocation). Timetabling will continue during the summer months.

Students must attend class and participate in all of their chosen subjects throughout the entirety of the Junior or Leaving Certificate cycle. There may be some scope for subject choice change in exceptional circumstances during September. Applications must be made to the Principal in writing. Change of mind applications will not be considered after September 30th.

**Oversubscription of subjects**:

If subjects are oversubscribed the following criteria will apply:

1. Student preferences
2. Subject taken to Junior Certificate level
3. Lottery

**Additional subjects outside of school:**

The school will not be in a position to accommodate students studying additional subjects outside of school.

**Programme choices:**

Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Applied programme choices will also be completed by students in mid-March. Applications for those programmes are set down in the TY/LCA admissions policies. LCVP is compulsory for all students in 5th Year. There is a copy of the Vocational Subject Groupings that are required to sit the LCVP exam attached (Circular 40/2013).

An Interview panel will be created by the school to determine entry to these programmes, however, the final decision rests with the Principal of the school.

**Review:**

This policy will be reviewed when deemed necessary by School Management.

Appendix 1A DRAFT – updated annually

**1st Year**

**Student Preference Form**

The purpose of the preference form is to help us establish the demand for subjects within your son/daughter’s year group.

From these preferences we will be able to establish what subjects should be placed together in the “Subject Option Bands”.

All students will study Maths, English and Irish (unless exempt) History, Geography, CSPE and three other choice subjects for their Junior Certificate.

Please rank the following 1-6,

1 being the subject you would like to study the most and so on. Numbers 4 and 5 will be spare subjects in case you do not get one of your top 3.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Art  |  |
| Business Studies |  |
| French |  |
| German |  |
| Home Economics |  |
| Metalwork (Materials Tech Metal) |  |
| Science |  |
| Technical Graphics |  |
| Woodwork (Materials Tech Wood) |  |
| Music |  |

An information evening (7th March) has taken place for parents regarding subject choices, student have had a subject choice session in school also.

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**STRICT Deadline for return to the office: Friday 10th March by 3.40pm**

Appendix 2A DRAFT – updated annually

**3rd Year and TY Students**

**Subject Preference Form**

The purpose of the preference form is to help establish the demand for subjects within this year group. From this we will be able to establish what subject should be placed together in the “Subject Option Bands”.

All students will study Maths, English and Irish (unless exempt) and four other choice subjects for their certificate.

Please rank the following 1-6, 1 being the subject you want to study the most and so on. Number 5 and 6 will be spare subjects in case you do not get one of your top 4.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Accounting |  |
| Agricultural Science |  |
| Art |  |
| Biology |  |
| LC Business |  |
| Chemistry |  |
| Construction Studies |  |
| Design and Communication Graphics |  |
| Economics |  |
| Engineering |  |
| French |  |
| Geography |  |
| History |  |
| Home Economics |  |
| Physics |  |

Have you applied for either LCA or TY programme also? YES NO

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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