LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED (LCA) PLAN

FEBRUARY 2026

St. Brendan's Community School

St. Brendan's Community School Mission Statement

"Our aim is to create a caring community of learning where each individual is valued as a unique human being."

Ethos

St. Brendan's Community School is a caring and inclusive school. The staff are committed to fostering educational excellence and work collaboratively to empower all students to reach their full potential – academically, socially, physically, and personally. Through partnership and cooperation, the school respects and nurtures the dignity and individuality of every student.

Education in St. Brendan's Community School is understood as the ongoing development of the whole person, enabling students to realise their strengths, talents, and aspirations. Students are encouraged from the outset to view themselves as active partners in their own learning. The school prepares students for public examinations and for life beyond school, recognising the importance of qualifications for further education, training, and employment.

St. Brendan's Community School recognises that students come from diverse cultural and social backgrounds and have a wide range of abilities, interests, and future goals. The school values the vital role of parents and guardians and acknowledges the importance of the wider community in supporting students' education. Students are encouraged to engage positively and responsibly within their community.

Aim of the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

St. Brendan's Community School offers the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Programme as a distinct, self-contained two-year programme following the Junior Certificate. The programme is designed to prepare students for adult life, further education, training, and employment.

The LCA Programme recognises and values the talents of all students, particularly those whose strengths may not be fully acknowledged within the Established Leaving Certificate. It provides opportunities for students to develop responsibility, self-esteem, self-knowledge, and practical life skills. The programme is innovative in both teaching and assessment, with a strong emphasis on continuous assessment, practical learning, and preparation for the world of work.

The aims and objectives of the LCA Programme align with the guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Skills and include:

- Education that recognises the talents of all students and supports them in applying learning to real-life contexts
- Education that promotes personal development, responsibility, self-esteem, and self-awareness

Admission Procedures

- An information session outlining the LCA Programme will be provided for all Third Year and Transition Year students and their parents/guardians.
- Following this information session, LCA Application Forms will be made available to students.
- Completed Application Forms must be returned to the school by the specified closing date. Late applications may not be considered.
- Submission of an application form does not guarantee or imply an offer of a place on the programme.
- External applicants must first apply for admission to St. Brendan's Community School in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy. If accepted as a student of the school, they may then apply for entry to the LCA Programme and will be subject to the same selection process as internal applicants.
- Priority will be given to students currently enrolled in St. Brendan's Community School.

Selection Process

An LCA Selection Committee will be established. All applicants will be interviewed, and suitability for the programme will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Level of interest and motivation demonstrated by the student
- Willingness to participate fully in all aspects of the LCA Programme
- Attendance record
- Behavioural record
- The student's ability to benefit from and contribute positively to the programme
- The student's pastoral and support needs, as identified by the Year Head, HSCL Coordinator, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain and/or other relevant school personnel

Following the selection process, successful applicants will be offered a provisional place on the programme. Parents/guardians will be informed in writing. Acceptance of a place is subject to the signing of an LCA Contract by both the student and parent/guardian. Once the signed contract is returned, the student is deemed accepted onto the LCA Programme.

Curriculum Framework

The LCA Programme in St. Brendan's Community School follows the curriculum framework and module descriptors as set out by the Department of Education and Skills.

Programme Structure

Vocational Preparation

- English and Communications

Vocational Education

- Mathematical Applications
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Two Vocational Specialisms

General Education

- Arts Education
- Social Education
- Languages
- Leisure and Recreation

Elective Courses

Vocational Specialisms and elective modules are determined annually based on:

- Student needs and interests
- Staff expertise and availability
- Parental expectations
- Local community and employment resources

Assessment

Assessment of the LCA Programme follows the procedures and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills and is carried out over two years under the following headings:

1. Satisfactory completion of modules
2. Performance in student tasks
3. Performance in terminal examinations

Modules

Students are awarded credits for the satisfactory completion of key assignments in each module. A minimum of 90% attendance is required in order to be awarded module credits.

Student Tasks

Students complete seven tasks over the four sessions of the programme. Each task requires the completion of a written report outlining the process involved. Student tasks are assessed by external examiners appointed by the State Examinations Commission.

Terminal Examinations

Terminal examinations take place in the following subjects:

- English and Communications
- Mathematical Applications
- Social Education
- Languages
- Two Vocational Specialisms

Certification

Students who successfully complete the LCA Programme will receive a Leaving Certificate Applied from the State Examinations Commission. All credits achieved are recorded on the certificate.

Award	Result	Credits
Pass	60 - 69%	120 - 139
Merit	70 - 84%	140 - 169
Distinction	85 - 100%	170 - 200

Programme Coordination

The LCA Programme is coordinated by the appointed LCA Programme Coordinator Frances Dowling in St. Brendan's Community School.

Work Experience

Work experience is a core component of the LCA Programme. Students are required to arrange their own work experience placements and must attend for the full duration of designated work placement blocks.

Key requirements include:

- Work experience should ideally be completed in at least two different career areas
- Students must secure placements prior to the commencement of both Year 1 and Year 2
- Students may not complete work experience in a workplace where they are already employed on a part-time basis
- A Work Experience Diary must be completed satisfactorily for each placement

Students are monitored during work experience through contact and/or visits by a member of the teaching staff. Feedback from employers forms an important part of the learning process. St. Brendan's Community School values the support of local businesses and expects students to act responsibly, professionally, and to the best of their ability while on placement.

Programme Entry Requirements

Students applying for the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme are required to complete an LCA Application Form. Following the selection process, and where a place is offered, acceptance onto the programme is conditional on the signing of an LCA Student Contract by both the student and parent/guardian.

Ratification, Implementation and Review

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28/5/26
- This policy has been made available to School Personnel and the Parents' Association. It is also published on the School Website and the School App. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and the patron upon request.
- This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once every two years. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to School Personnel and the Parents' Association. The review will also be published on the School Website and the School App. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department of Education.

Signed: _____

Joan Hogan

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 28/5/26

Signed: _____

John Kennedy

Principal/Secretary of Board of Management

Date: 28/5/26

Date of next review: _____