

28<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

**Re: Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) – Changes for 2026 and Data Protection Information**

We are writing to inform you about the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) for our current Third Year students, including changes being implemented nationally and to outline the process we follow for collecting, storing and protecting student data in line with GDPR.

Previously students would have received their Junior Certificate results separately, in October and their JCPA certificate would have followed in March. The DEY are now issuing one certificate only – the JCPA certificate which will contain the following:

**What is the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)?**

The JCPA is the **final certification award for Junior Cycle**, replacing the former Junior Certificate. It provides a broad picture of a student's learning and achievements over the three years of Junior Cycle and may be required for progression to further or higher education. Students must complete one or two CBA's depending on the subject requirements, in the instance where only one is required the other CBA will appear as Not Reported on the certificate.

The JCPA reports on:

- Results in **state certified final examinations**
- Achievement in **Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)** for subjects and short courses
- Achievement in **Wellbeing**
- Achievement in **Level 2 or Level 1 Learning Programmes**, where applicable
- A brief summary of **Other Areas of Learning** and **Other Areas of Wellbeing** completed during

Junior Cycle

**Changes Being Implemented from 2026**

The Department of Education and Youth is currently updating JCPA processes with the aim of allowing students to receive their JCPA earlier in the school year in future years.

As part of this change:

- Schools are required to ensure that all assessment data is recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- There is an increased focus on completing data entry during the school year rather than after examinations
- The long-term goal is for students nationally to receive their JCPA in **October each year from 2027 onwards**

These changes do **not** affect the content of the JCPA itself, but they do affect the **timing and organisation of data collection and entry**.

### **How Student Data Is Collected and Used**

To produce the JCPA, the school collects and processes relevant student data, including:

- Student identification details (such as name and date of birth) from the school management system and PPOD.
- Subject and short course enrolments
- Classroom-Based Assessment descriptors
- State examination results provided by the State Examinations Commission
- Achievement in Level 2 or Level 1 Learning Programmes, where applicable

For most students, this data is processed through the Department of Education and Youth's **Post-Primary Online Database (PPOD)**. In certain cases (e.g. special schools or specific learning programmes), data may be processed through the **Junior Cycle Awards Database (JCAD)**.

Information entered under "**Other Areas of Learning**" and "**Other Areas of Wellbeing**" is completed at school level and is **not stored on the Department's central databases**. Students have been asked to complete a **form before the 8<sup>th</sup> May** with regards to their Other Areas of Learning. It is the individual student's responsibility to ensure they have all their relevant information in this form so it can be included on their JCPA. **If the student fails to fill in this information, it will appear as Not Reported.**

### **Data Protection and GDPR Compliance**

The school and the Department of Education and Youth act as **Joint Data Controllers** for the purposes of producing the JCPA. This means that both bodies share responsibility for ensuring that student data is:

- Processed **lawfully, fairly and transparently**
- Used **only for the purpose of Junior Cycle certification**
- Stored **securely**
- Retained **only for as long as necessary**

### **Key points for parents/guardians:**

- The school retains a copy of the JCPA for **seven years after a student turns 18**
- The Department of Education and Youth retains copies of JCPAs for a longer period to allow for re-issue and statistical purposes
- Student data is **not shared with third parties**, except where legally required or when a student transfers to another post-primary school
- Only authorised personnel have access to student data

For students participating in Level 2 or Level 1 Learning Programmes, explicit parental/guardian consent is required for recording certain assessment outcomes. Where applicable, will be provided separately to parents/guardians.

**Further Information**

If you have any questions regarding:

- The JCPA process
- The information included on your child's JCPA
- Data protection or privacy matters

Please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

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Declan O'Toole  
Principal