CBS Thurles

Subject Choice Policy

Mission Statement

CBS Thurles is a place of learning where students are prepared for adult life, academically, emotionally, spiritually and culturally. We strive for a safe environment free from bullying.

We aim to promote the Christian values inspired by the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice.

We seek to create an atmosphere of respect for the needs and talents of all members of our school community, while challenging all to reach their full potential.

Rationale for this Policy

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with CBS Thurles Child Safeguarding Statement and in line with the Children First Act 2015 (and Addendum 2019) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools - revised 2023. Consideration has been given to all aspects of the wellbeing of students at CBS Thurles.

Aims of Policy

To work towards achieving the mission statement of our school.

To meet the requirements of the 1998 Education Act to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.

This Subject Choice Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for subject selection at CBS Thurles, a secondary school committed to providing a well-rounded education that meets the needs and aspirations of our students. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students make informed decisions about their subject choices and are supported in achieving their academic and career goals.

Objectives of Policy

To identify and support students who will be requested to make subject choices.

To inform all the partners in the school of the procedures involved in subject choice at CBS Thurles.

To ensure a transparent policy by identifying the challenges that may arise within subject choice.

To provide a wide range of subjects to cater to diverse interests and career aspirations.

To help students make informed choices based on their abilities, interests, and future career goals.

To facilitate a smooth transition from one academic level to another, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for further education or the workforce.

To promote fairness and equity in subject allocation. This policy applies to: Incoming 1st Year students. Entrants into 5th Year from Transition Year or 3rd Year.

Important Notes:

● Due to timetabling and resource restraints, it is not possible to facilitate students who are exempt from Irish or European languages to take an alternative subject.

● At Senior Cycle, students are not obliged to opt for a European language. However, students are made aware of the implications of not doing a European language for third level options.

● All aspects of the subjects on offer are discussed at Information Evenings throughout the academic year. Parents are advised to attend these events because subject choice is demand- and resource-dependent and changes from year to year.

Subject Choices

● Incoming 1st Year students:

o Choice of languages.

o Students choose four of ten subjects for the Junior Cycle.

● Entrants to 5th Year:

o Choice of four option subjects for Leaving Certificate from those available.

o Students may also avail of an additional eight subject.

Who is Responsible?

The ultimate decision and responsibility for subject choice rests with the principal and the Board of Management of the CBS Thurles.

Procedures for entrants into 1st Year

1. In the case of incoming 1st Year students, parents are informed of:

● Subject choice.

● Information Evening for parents on subject choice regarding the subject content and assessment methods for Junior Cycle. Links to Leaving Certificate subjects are highlighted.

● The procedure for selection of their preference on the appropriate form.

● The deadline for submitting such forms.

2. Parents or students requiring further information subsequent to the Information Evening, may make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor at a mutually convenient time.

3. The school makes every effort to accommodate student preferences. Where it is not possible to do so, or where parents or students are dissatisfied with the choices being offered to them, the following options are available:

● An appointment may be set up with the student and/or their parents to discuss the matter.

● Alternative choices may be proposed with reference to career implications.

● Subject to availability, suitable alternatives may then be selected by the student and ratified by the parents.

Procedures for entrants from TY into 5th Year

The process of choosing subjects will be informed by student engagement with a variety of guidance related resources. Transition Year students undertake a module on subject choice as part of the guidance programme.

When making subject choice, students should consider the following:

● The subjects they are good at.

● The subjects they like and have an interest in.

● The minimum entry requirement for colleges and courses.

They are given information on:

● The list of subjects available to choose from.

● The entry requirements for 3rd level colleges and other career areas.

● The essential subjects for particular courses.

● The general relevance of subjects to all career areas.

Teachers of Leaving Certificate subjects are available to provide information on their subject area so that students are informed about:

● Subject content.

● Assessment of the subject.

● Allocation of marks for assignments or project work for the Leaving Certificate

Exam in that subject.

Parents are informed of the Information Evening regarding subject choice. A date is given to parents and students by which subject choice forms must be returned. Parents and/or students are welcome to request a one to one appointment with the Guidance Counsellor regarding subject choice, dependent on the availability of the Guidance Counsellor.

● A process begins whereby four bands of subjects are drawn up in consultation with students and parents, until an optimal fit is found within the school context.

● In the context of wellbeing, any difficulties that arise in accommodating student preferences are discussed with students, parents and the school principal.

Alternative choices are proposed with reference to career implications so that student wellbeing is maintained.

● Suitable alternatives are selected by students and ratified by the parents in all cases subject to availability.

Procedure for entrants from 3rd Year into 5th Year

3rd Year students are visited by the TY Coordinator and are given details on the TY programme, its content, experiences and value to their education.

Parents of all Third-Year students are informed of a Parents Information Evening on:

1. Joining the TY Programme.

or

2. Proceeding directly to 5th Year.

Parents are given a date by which to return an initial preference form. This form identifies those students who will proceed directly to 5th Year.

Subject Change of Mind in 5th Year

● No changes in subject choice are permitted after 30th September on entering 5th Year.

● Changes prior to 30th September can be facilitated only where class size permits and subject to timetabling restrictions and parental consent.

The following procedures are in place for students where change of subject choice may be facilitated:

● Students and/or parents arrange a consultation with the Guidance Counsellor.

● Request from parents must be submitted to the Guidance Counsellor.

● Request is discussed with year head Guidance Counsellor and the relevant teachers.

● Change is permitted when all concerned agree and when the change of option form is fully completed.

Over-Subscription of Subjects

● If subjects are oversubscribed, student application to study and completion of project work during Junior Cycle may be considered.

● All forms are signed by parents.

Approved by CBS Thurles Board of Management

Date: 25th March 2026