



St. Mary's Diocesan School

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Principal: Catherina McNicholas

Deputy Principals: Carrie Byrne, Lorraine Noone, Nicola Oglesby

Subject Swap Policy

Mission Statement

St. Mary's Diocesan School is a Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Meath and patronage of the Bishop of Meath. The school is committed to the development of the whole person offering equal opportunities to all to achieve their full potential in a familial Christian environment. The school aspires to an education based on high ideals and a broad curriculum, which will allow our students to confidently play their role in society.

Aims

We aim to develop a community of learning in which each pupil's talents, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, may unfold as fully as possible in an atmosphere of openness, confidence and generosity. We seek to promote in all our students' qualities of honesty and integrity and the capacity for authentic, courageous self-expression. Our motto "In Christo Confido", inspires us to promote the emergence of reflective, articulate and committed Christians with a deep sense of their vocation to shape their world according to the values of the gospel.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the formal procedures and criteria governing student requests to change subjects after the commencement of the academic year. It aims to ensure that any subject change supports the student's educational needs, minimises disruption to teaching and learning, and maintains operational consistency across the school.

Scope

This policy applies to all students in Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle who wish to request a subject change, as well as to parents/guardians and school staff involved in the decision-making process.

Guiding Principles

All decisions regarding subject changes are informed by:

Student learning needs and academic progression;

Class size and space availability;

Timetable and option block feasibility;

Professional advice from teachers, SEN staff, and the Guidance Counsellor;

and the overall best interests of the student.

Timeframe for Requests

Requests for subject changes should ordinarily be submitted within the first 3/4 weeks of the academic year. Requests outside this window will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as AEN recommendations, medical or wellbeing considerations, or incorrect level placement.

Procedure for Requesting a Subject Swap

Step 1: A written request is submitted by the student and parent/guardian to the Year Head, outlining the rationale for the change.

Step 2: The Year Head consults with the Deputy Principal, the current and prospective subject teachers, Guidance Counsellor (where relevant), and AEN Coordinator if needed.

Step 3: Deputy Principal verifies timetable feasibility and class capacity.

Step 4: A final decision is made by the Principal or Deputy Principal and communicated in writing.

Conditions of Approval

If a subject swap is approved, the student is responsible for catching up on any missed work. Teachers will provide guidance where appropriate. Completion of missed assessments may be required, subject to feasibility and teacher discretion. Changes between levels (HL/OL) may occur based on professional judgement of teachers and AEN personnel.

Reasons a Swap May Be Declined

A request may be refused if the class is full, the timetable does not permit the move, the request is made too late to support successful learning, or the change is likely to impact the student's academic progress negatively.

Appeals Process

Parents/guardians may appeal a declined request by submitting a written appeal to the Principal within 10 school days. The Principal's decision is final.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as needed.