



St. Columba's College

Academic Structure 2010-2011

Form Primary (11-12 year olds - August-September)

The equivalent to Sixth Class in Primary Schools (or First Year of secondary schooling in the UK). Pupils sit an assessment in English and Maths in October preceding the year of entry. In Form Primary pupils learn: *English, Maths, French, Irish* (unless exempt), *Spanish* (if exempt from Irish on grounds of previous education outside Ireland), *Latin, History, Geography, Science, Computer Studies, Art, Music, Religious Education (RE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Physical Education (PE)*. Remedial *English* and *Maths* are taught to those exempt from Irish on grounds of a learning difficulty.

Form I (12-13 year olds - August-September)

Our main point of entry from Irish Primary Schools. Similar to Form Primary, pupils sit an assessment in English and Maths in October prior to the year of entry. Subjects covered in Form I are: *English, Maths, French, Irish* (unless exempt), *Spanish* (if exempt from Irish on grounds of previous education outside Ireland), *Latin, History, Geography, Science, Computer Studies, Art, Music, RE, SPHE, PE*. Remedial *English* and *Maths* are taught to those exempt from Irish on grounds of a learning difficulty.

Form II (13-14 year olds - August-September)

The normal point of entry for boys and girls who have sat the Common Entrance examination in Preparatory schools for admission to senior schools. Subjects covered in Form II: *English, Maths, French, Irish* (unless exempt), *Spanish* (if exempt from Irish on grounds of previous education outside Ireland), *History, Geography, Science, Computer Studies, SPHE, RE, Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), PE* plus a choice of *Art/Music* and *Classical Studies/Latin/Technical Graphics*. Remedial *English* and *Maths* are taught to those exempt from Irish on grounds of a learning difficulty.

Form III (14-15 year olds - August-September)

This is the year in which all pupils sit the Junior Certificate in a range of subjects at Higher or Ordinary level. The following subjects are timetabled (some are optional):

English, Maths, French, Irish (unless exempt), *Spanish, History, Geography, Science, SPHE, RE, CSPE*, plus a choice of *Art/Music* and *Classical Studies/Latin/Technical Graphics*.

Form IV (Transition Year) (15-16 year olds - August-September)

A compulsory Transition Year Programme at this level maintains academic momentum through the study of nine academic subjects and in-depth experience of extracurricular activities. *English, Maths, French* and *Irish* (unless exempt), are compulsory, and the following elective subjects are also timetabled:

Spanish, Latin, History, Geography (European Studies), Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Business, Art, Classical Studies, Construction Studies, Music, Computer Studies, Astronomy, Careers, Drama, RE, SPHE, PE, Information Literacy.

Examinations are held at the end of the Michaelmas and Hilary terms. There is also considerable extracurricular emphasis on *Drama, Art, Music* and outward bound experience, career guidance and future subject choice, together with a wide range of expeditions.

Forms V (16-17 year olds) and VI (17-18 year olds - August-September)

In these two final years, pupils study for the Leaving Certificate, the national examination which is taken in June of the Sixth Form. The Leaving Certificate is more broadly-based than its British equivalent, 'A' levels, but shares much with Scottish 'Highers'. It has achieved a high international reputation in recent years. Most pupils study seven subjects, which can include both arts and sciences, and can be taken either at Higher or Ordinary level.

In St. Columba's, pupils must choose *English, Maths, French* and/or *Spanish* and *Irish* (unless exempt), and then are able to select from these additional, examined subjects: *Applied Maths, Latin, History, Geography, Geology, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Business, Economics, Art, Classical Studies, Music, Agricultural Science, Construction Studies, Design and Communication Graphics.*

Pupils also have one period of *RE* and *SPHE* a week and, depending on their main subject choices, may select one of the following to study for two periods per week: *Art History, Computer Studies, PE.*

If applying for Irish third-level Colleges, six of the examined subjects above count towards 'points' in the national system run by the Central Applications Office. Places in Colleges and Universities are allocated centrally, successful applicants being those who achieve or exceed the relevant 'points' tariff for a particular course.

If applying for UK third-level Colleges, pupils enter the UCAS system. Both our Guidance Counsellor and Senior Tutor help all Form VI pupils to complete their forms, aided by a specially appointed individual academic tutor. It is worth pointing out that a majority of Columbans choose to send applications through both systems and make their final choice after they receive their Leaving Certificate results. Using two systems does, of course, provide a very broad range of opportunities.

Pupils who leave St. Columba's go to a wide spectrum of third-level institutions across Ireland, Britain and further afield. In the past seven years, Columbans have entered the following Universities and other third-level Colleges:

Ireland

Trinity College, Dublin; University College, Dublin; University of Ulster; University College, Cork; University College, Galway; Dublin Institute of Technology; Dublin City University; Royal College of Surgeons; National College of Art and Design; Dun Laoghaire College of Art.

Great Britain

Trinity College, Cambridge; St. John's College, Cambridge; Keble College, Oxford; St. Hugh's College, Oxford; Imperial College, London; University of Aberdeen; University of Birmingham; University of Bristol; University of Edinburgh; University of Durham; University of East Anglia; University of Leicester; University of Nottingham; University of St. Andrew's; Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts; University of Newcastle; St. Martin's College of Art, London; University of Exeter; University of Stirling; Brunel University; Edinburgh College of Art; Royal College of Agriculture, Cirencester.

Elsewhere

Cornell University; Stanford University; Yale University; University of Berlin; University of Heidelberg; University of Madrid; University of Moscow; University of the Sorbonne; University of Perth, Western Australia; University of Cape Town.