



CORK EDUCATE TOGETHER

SECONDARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS



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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Welcome to Cork Educate Together Secondary School.

Founded in 2016, our school is a rapidly-expanding and idealistic community of learning, which was described by the Irish Times (22nd May 2018), as one of the most innovative schools in Ireland.

The staff, students and parents of CETSS are developing a new model of 21st century education in Cork. Fully resourced by the Department of Education and Skills, it is a significant and long-awaited development in the educational history of the region.

Our school is an alternative, grounded not in only in the richness of our collective cultures, but also in the insights of the best contemporary educational systems world-wide. As such, CETSS will be technology-based; virtually text-book free and (genuinely) academic, by emphasising problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

We are also a leader in the promotion of Ethical and Development Education; Education for Sustainability; collaborative learning; inter-disciplinary learning and Student Voice.

In championing Restorative Practice, we foster and value positive relationships, insist upon respectful dialogue and promote student and teacher individuality.

In short, we emphasise problem-solving, as a way of learning.

CETSS is currently located in temporary accommodation in Griffith College, St. Lukes and will relocate to a new purposebuilt building in the Douglas/Rochestown area in the near future. In the meantime, Department-supported buses are run from Carrigaline and Douglas.

Enrolment for future in-coming first Years, is managed via our website www.cetsl.ie.

We look forward to welcoming your child to our community, should you make that choice.

Colm O'Connor, BA, HDip Ed. MEd, PGDEd.

Principal of CETSS
Member of the Board of
Directors of Educate Together



CORK EDUCATE TOGETHER
SECONDARY SCHOOL

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DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

At CETSS we offer an innovative curriculum, delivered by dedicated and passionate teaching staff. Together, we have produced our own Short-Courses to complement the core subject areas and have also developed our own subjects such as Change-Makers and Sustainability. Our teachers ensure that every student develops life-long skills and emotional intelligence, alongside the knowledge and understanding necessary for their chosen areas of specialism. We want our students to be adventurous beyond the curriculum, inspired to achieve more than they thought possible.

Wellbeing is at the core of everything we do. The respectful atmosphere of our school ensures that there are strong relationships between staff and students and each member of our school community is truly valued and cared for. Our students learn that everyone can grow, given a positive and determined mindset, and can make a real difference to themselves, to others, and to the wider community. Student Leadership is encouraged through our student led assemblies where their voices are powerful and valued and their ideas feed directly into all areas of school life.

Our students and staff come from all over the world, and we celebrate their individual stories and contexts every day. We work in partnership with our parents/ guardians and strive to ensure that all our students, regardless of ability, reach their full potential in a positive learning environment. Our

active Parents' Council support the school not only with fundraising initiatives but also with policy development, school planning and organizing visiting speakers.

We have a dynamic co-curricular programme with opportunities in sports, music, drama, choir, clubs, digital maker-space, and a climate action-group. This programme evolves each year to match student-interests. Our brand new Transition Year programme was developed with students and parents to provide a broad range of activities and experiences that promote personal and academic growth.

Joining CETSS was one of the best decisions I have ever made – and if you also choose to join our community, whether as a student, a teacher or a parent, you will quickly realise that you are part of something very unique and very special.

David Cole BA, HDip Ed. MEd.



VISION | AIMS | ETHOS

VISION

Cork ETSS strives to provide a caring and supportive school community that nurtures each student's personal, social and academic potential throughout their school career. Fundamental to our vision is an emphasis on 21st Century skills, so that all our students, irrespective of belief system, race, ethnicity, class, culture, gender, language, sexual orientation and ability, are equipped with the learning habits and qualifications to thrive in an ever-evolving world. We believe that all people should have access to an excellent education that is inclusive and fosters a culture where students can be who they want to be.

AIMS

Cork ETSS is committed to providing a learning experience that is student-centred. By assessing not only what students learn but how they learn, Cork ETSS will enable all students to contribute meaningfully to their local, national and global communities, embrace the rights and responsibilities of active citizenship and develop the knowledge and skills needed to live, learn and work in the 21st century.

ETHOS

Cork ETSS's ethos is built on the values set out in the Blueprint for Educate Together Second-level Schools. The Board of Management upholds the ethos of the school, ensuring that it is:



EQUALITY-BASED



CO-EDUCATIONAL



STUDENT-CENTRED



DEMOCRATICALLY RUN



STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

In Cork ETSS, we place students at the centre of the learning process, within the National Curriculum. Our vision for teaching and learning builds on the thinking underpinning the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015), which outlines the curriculum and assessment arrangements that will provide students with learning opportunities that achieve a balance between learning subject knowledge and developing a range of skills and thinking abilities.

Given the complex personal and global challenges facing today's youth, our school aims to provide our students with the values, skills and knowledge necessary to both navigate that world and to change it for the better.

The new curriculum and assessment arrangements for Junior Cycle will promote a focus on active and collaborative learning. At Cork ETSS, we will endeavour to provide our students with learning opportunities that will enable students to:



ANALYSE
information in new and creative ways



BE CREATIVE



INVESTIGATE
issues



PROBLEM-SOLVE



EXPLORE
topics and concepts



APPLY LEARNING
to new challenges and situations

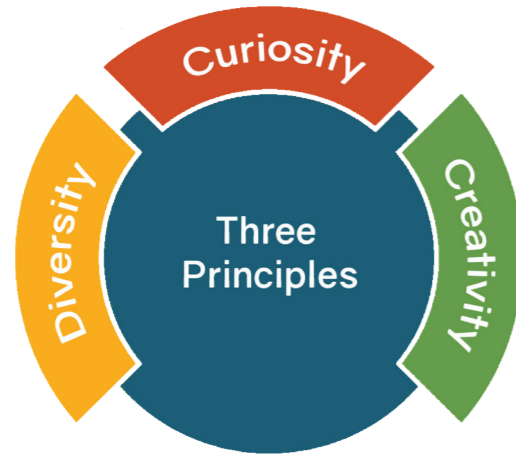


THINK
for themselves

THE CURRICULUM

In Cork ETSS, we welcome the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015). We support its student-centred philosophy – a philosophy that places students at the centre of the learning process and is fundamental to the values and commitments of Educate Together.

We are delighted to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to our first-year students – a curriculum built on the following principles:



1. DIVERSITY

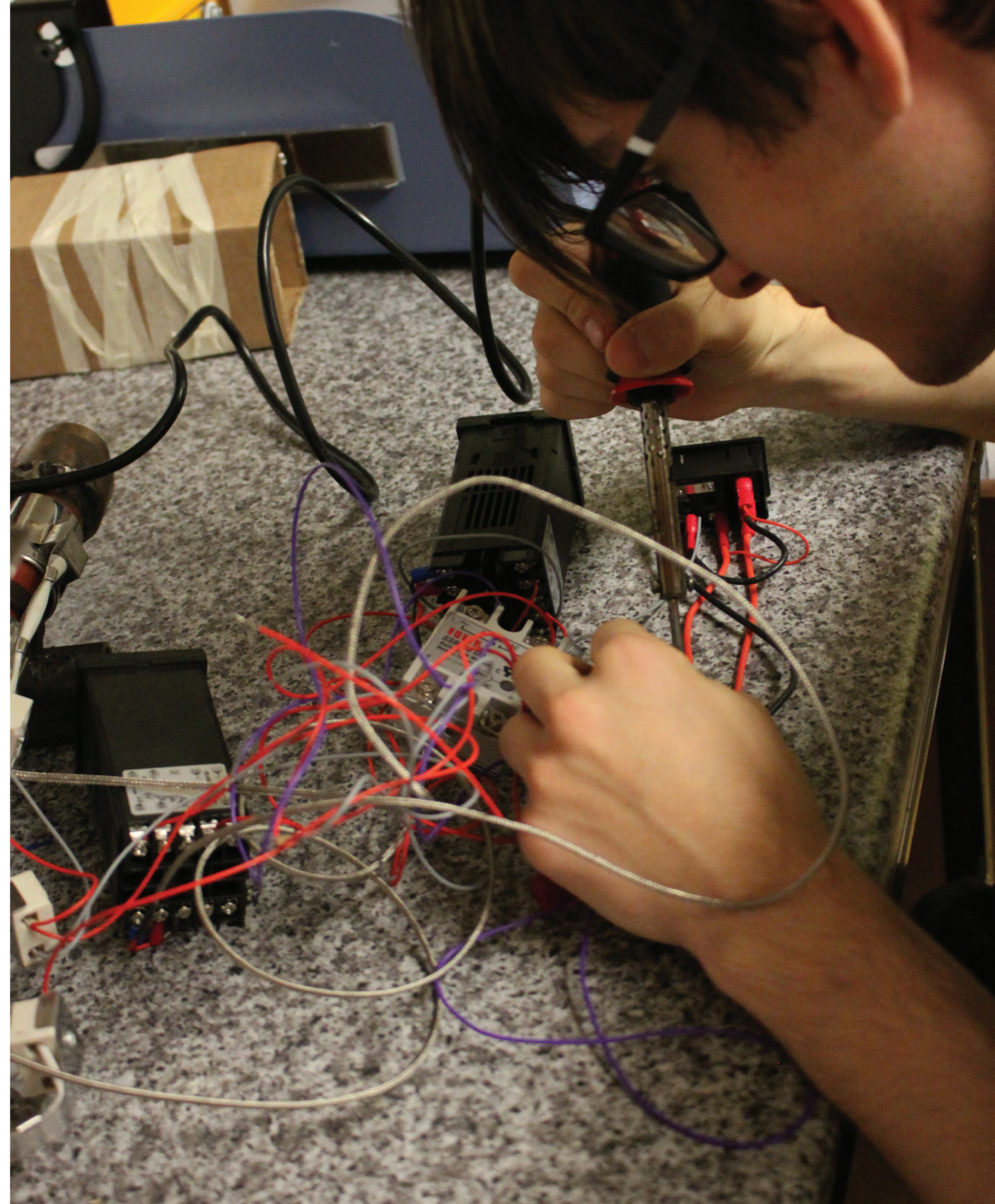
Human beings are naturally different. They are diverse. Teaching and learning must be student-centred. Young children prosper best in a broad curriculum that celebrates their talents. A curriculum that provides equality of opportunity where every student can reach his or her potential.

2. CURIOSITY

If teachers can light the spark of curiosity in their students, they foster a culture where students become natural learners across a multitude of disciplines. Curiosity is the engine of achievement.

3. CREATIVITY

One of the most significant roles of education is to awaken the powers of imagination and creativity. Creativity and critical thinking are essential 21st century skills and should be nurtured by schools so that young people not only become successful learners but responsible members of society, effective workers, caring members of the community and lifelong learning in an interdependent world.



A RESTORATIVE SCHOOL

Restorative Practice refers to a range of strategies, which can be used to promote positive relationships and to resolve/restore relations if they come under strain.

A restorative school, therefore, is one which takes a restorative approach to resolving conflict and preventing harm. Restorative approaches are positive and constructive and avoid the use of shame and blame, which are more common in punitive/authoritarian systems.

In particular, we:

- Aspire to use restorative language when we speak about our school and members of our community.
- Try to use one to one, small circle or larger circle RP interventions to resolve issues in the school.
- Implement positive, proactive interventions to create a positive school culture (Picnics, student assembly, teambuilding, Learnsmart (group) or RP plus (individuals).
- Use RP to inform our student support interventions and discipline procedures (agreed consequences, counselling, referrals, other supports).
- Have RP training for the whole school community, led by our two in-house, fully qualified trainers
- Have an RP mentoring programme for TY year – student to student RP mentoring.

Whilst RP is our preferred method for resolving conflict, it is also worth noting, that we retain the right to apply traditional disciplinary sanctions, where necessary.

THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

Today, students live in a world that is continuously evolving to meet the challenges of the 21st century. As our world becomes more complex and interconnected, there is considerable discussion taking place in relation to how our students learn.

In Cork ETSS we recognise the need for education to move away from the “one size fits all” model to one that embraces the values of equality, diversity and inclusivity. Cork ETSS endeavours to create a learning environment that is participatory, inclusive and will adopt policies and practices to support this. The classroom will be a place where student voice will be evident in teaching and learning. Cork ETSS will foster a culture where success and achievement is celebrated across all disciplines. Cork ETSS does not exclude; diversity is our strength. We aim to provide a tailored education for all and uphold our commitment to Educate Together’s vision statement - ‘Learn Together to Live Together’.

Cork ETSS strives to provide a learning experience that is learner-centred and learner-led. Whilst some rote-learning is necessary in certain subjects, it has been over-emphasised in the past. By way of contrast, we provide students with the opportunity, where possible, to engage in higher order learning. In Cork ETSS, teachers work as facilitators and students take an active role in their own learning.

Cork ETSS embraces the use of innovative technologies to support students’ learning. Technology has become an integral part of life and learning patterns in the 21st century. The school is committed to enhancing teaching and learning through the use of innovative technologies.



21st Century Skills - The 4 Cs



A DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Technology is woven into just about every aspect of our lives. It is how we work, play, learn, communicate, shop, share information and so on. In Cork ETSS, we believe that the importance of integrating technology in the classroom just makes sense. We are passionate about education. We believe that learning should be inspirational and accessible to all.

Technology in the classroom is changing the experience of education. It is changing the way young people learn, how educators teach and how we all communicate.

Today, schools have the opportunity to integrate mobile devices like iPads in the classroom to open up a whole new world of engagement, personalised learning and collaboration in the classroom.

Our iPads 1:1 Initiative in partnership with Wriggle will be one of many innovative tools used in the classroom. Cork ETSS will be a non-textbook school, at Junior Cycle. Our highly qualified teachers create their own subject content which will be made accessible to students on our virtual learning environment (VLE). Other benefits for using iPads in the classroom are:



PERSONALISED LEARNING

Students can work and excel at their own level and pace. Teaching is student-centred based on the diverse needs of all students.



FELXIBLE LEARNING

Learning is extended beyond the walls of the classroom. Students can carry on learning anytime, anywhere.



ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

Technology, used correctly, excites students. When students are engaged, they learn better.



COLLABORATION

Students are empowered to collaborate both inside and outside the classroom.



COMMUNICATION

Students and teachers can communicate via our Virtual Learning Environment.

Nevertheless, we are alert to the balance needed between written and typed work, in preparation for state exams; the dangers associated with social media and the need to avoid over-use and screen addiction. All of these issues are dealt with in Digital Literacy classes and in staff meetings.

STUDENT VOICE

HOW DOES THIS LOOK?

Educate Together schools are democratic and inclusive in nature. The democratic and learner-centred principles that underpin the Educate Together ethos means providing students with opportunities to participate and influence many aspects of school life in Cork ETSS. Students who are actively involved in decisions about their lives are more likely to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

In Cork ETSS, students are empowered to engage in authentic decision-making, through their participation in Student Assemblies, committees and working groups. Wherever possible, they collaborate on curriculum design and assessment styles, as well as school management, through their membership of the Board of Management.



LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Where possible, and in the context of the National Curriculum's subject specifications, students make decisions about what they learn and how they learn and how their learning is assessed



CIRRICULAR PLANNING

Students participate in curricular planning and development



SCHOOL DESIGN

Students co-create the learning environment in the school



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Students engage in student/teacher and student/student focus groups on school self-evaluation and school improvement



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Elected student representatives link in with the Board of Management



ETHICAL EDUCATION IN ET SCHOOLS

ETHICAL EDUCATION

Ethical Education involves exploring different world views and beliefs, considering ethical dilemmas and the process of ethical education decision-making. Ethical Education invites students to engage with issues and problems facing society and aims to develop skills of critical thinking, discussion and debate. There are five strands to the Ethical Education framework for second-level schools. These are:

1. Living Morally and Ethically
2. Belief Systems
3. Identity, Diversity and Intellectual Learning
4. Education for Sustainability
5. Ethical Citizenship

The aim of these strands is to nurture and develop in students a caring and responsible approach to society. In Cork ETSS, Ethical Education is facilitated in the following ways:

CORE SUBJECT

Ethical Education is offered as a discrete subject once a week.

TUTOR & ASSEMBLY TIME

Ethical Education is embedded in all aspects of life in the school. As part of our tutor system, students are encouraged to engage in themes such as human rights, equality, sexuality, active citizenship, respect, inclusion and sustainability in form of monthly presentations at assemblies.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Teachers promote links between Ethical Education and other subjects and learning projects so that ethical issues and practice permeate through school life.

WELLBEING IN OUR SCHOOL

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new area of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. This area of learning will make the school's culture, ethos and commitment to wellbeing visible to our students. It will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It will enable students to build life skills and develop a strong connection with the school and the community.

Wellbeing matters, not simply from the perspectives of physical and mental health, but also because it leads to better educational outcomes.

Wellbeing is one of the eight Principles of Junior Cycle Education which states that "the student experience contributes directly to their physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience. Learning takes place in a climate focused on collective wellbeing of school, community and society."

THE SIX INDICATORS OF WELLBEING

ACTIVE

- Am I a confident and skilled participant in physical activity?
- How physically active am I?

RESPONSIBLE

- Do I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others?
- Do I make healthy eating choices?
- Do I know where my safety is at risk and do I make right choices?

CONNECTED

- Do I feel connected to my school, my friends, my community and the wider world?
- Do I appreciate that my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts?

RESILIENT

- Do I believe that I have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges?
- Do I know where I can go for help?
- Do I believe that with effort I can achieve?

RESPECTED

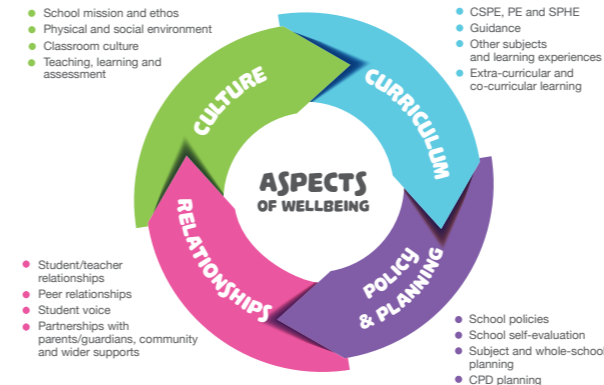
- Do I feel that I am listened to and valued?
- Do I have positive relationships with my friends, my peers and my teachers?
- Do I show care and respect for others?

AWARE

- Am I aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can I make sense of them?
- Am I aware of what my personal values are and do I think through my decisions?
- Do I understand what helps me to learn and how I can improve?



WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO WELLBEING : THE FOURS AREAS OF WELLBEING PROMOTION



ASPECTS OF WELLBEING

CULTURE

- School mission and ethos
- Physical and social environment
- Classroom culture
- Teaching, learning and assessment

CURRICULUM

- CSPE, PE and SPHE
- Guidance
- Other subjects and learning experiences
- Extra-curricular and co-curricular learning

RELATIONSHIPS

- Student/teacher relationships
- Peer relationships
- Student voice
- Partnerships with parents/guardians, community and wider supports

POLICY & PLANNING

- School policies
- School self-evaluation
- Subject and whole-school planning
- CPD planning



TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Cork ETSS is an innovative school. So what does this mean? For one, we share a common vision on the purpose of education.

The ways people learn is as unique as their fingerprints. We strive to provide a tailored and meaningful learning experience that provides our students with the platform to make sense of the world in which they live.

Cork ETSS is a non-textbook school, at Junior Cycle and Transition Year level. In creating and providing digital resources, teachers challenge themselves every day, looking beyond the norms of traditional classroom practice.



PERSONALISED LEARNING



COLLABORATION



FLEXIBLE LEARNING



COMMUNICATION



ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT



VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



JUNIOR CYCLE

In Cork ETSS our students follow a very broad negotiated curriculum. The curriculum comprises of the following subjects:

CORE



IRISH



ENGLISH



MATHS



SPANISH



SCIENCE



HISTORY



GEOGRAPHY



SOCIAL, PERSONAL & HEALTH EDUCATION (SPHE)

OPTIONS



BUSINESS STUDIES



MUSIC



VISUAL ART



HOME ECONOMICS



TECHNICAL GRAPHICS (TG)



TECHNOLOGY

SHORT COURSES



PE



CIVIC SOCIAL & POLITICAL EDUCATION (CSPE)



DIGITAL LITERACY



SUSTAINABILITY

Students will have the opportunity to choose 17 from a list of 19 subjects in first year. Strong emphasis is placed on the area of Wellbeing in the school. Not only do teachers support Wellbeing in all subjects, Wellbeing is embedded in the curriculum with a strong focus placed on CSPE, SPHE, Ethical Education, Education for Sustainability and Guidance. Wellbeing is further complimented by tutor delivered SPHE base classes.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

In Cork ETSS, we offer a range of extra-curricular activities, following a consultation with the students each September. These include:

-  Creativity Club
-  Drama
-  Rainbow Club
-  Literacy Lounge and Library
-  School Band
-  MakerSpace
-  Climate Action Committee
-  Chess Club and Board Games
-  Soccer
-  Athletics

Other Learning Experiences

-  Unicef Right's Respecting Schools Network
-  Eco-Unesco Young Environmentalists' Award
-  Young Philosophers' Award
-  Drama
-  Guest Speakers
-  Foreign Trip
-  Excursions

"WHERE STUDENTS LEARN TO SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS, USING 21STC SKILLS"





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