



16th September 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As 5<sup>th</sup> Years settle into Senior Cycle in Loreto College Foxrock, we are committed to supporting our students to continually reflect on their learning as they work towards reaching their potential. I am therefore writing to you to share how we will assess and report your daughter's progress over the course of 5<sup>th</sup> Year (the first year of Senior Cycle).

### **5<sup>th</sup> Year Assessments and Reports**

Reporting about your daughter's progress will be ongoing throughout the year and will help you and your daughter to understand and discuss learning.

You will be informed about how your daughter is progressing in the following ways:

- through teachers' comments on work (formative assessment)
- through grading of work and class assessments (summative assessment)
- October Progress Report which details strengths, progress made and next steps
- Learning Advice Meeting in January when you can speak to your daughter's teachers
- Easter Continuous Assessment Report
- Christmas and Summer Reports detailing house exam results

Reporting will provide:

- information about your daughter's strengths and next steps in their learning
- an opportunity for you to talk to your daughter about her progress
- an opportunity for you to give your views on your daughter's learning
- an opportunity for your daughter to give her views on her progress
- an opportunity to discuss how you can support their next steps in learning.

### **Comment-only Marking**

Until the end of September, and as part of a whole-school approach to assessment, teachers will be using a predominantly 'comment-only' approach to marking the work of all 5th Year students.

The rationale behind comment-only marking is that it helps students to focus on how they learn. Research shows that students respond better to constructive comments than to grades as it allows them to better understand how their work can be improved. At Senior Cycle, it helps students to be more active, independent and responsible participants in their own learning – skills that help our students to not just to achieve their full potential in state examinations but also to become lifelong learners. Staff may continue to record grades for students (where relevant to the individual subject) but these grades will only be shared with students at the end of September. The Department of Education and Science (DES) considers this approach to assessment an exemplar of 'highly effective practice' and it will, in time, become the generic standard for all schools. From the start of October, teachers may use a combination of comment-only and graded feedback.



## **Progress Reports**

In early October, all 5<sup>th</sup> Year parents/guardians will receive a progress report which will contain details of class participation, homework and study and overall progress. The purpose of the report is to facilitate conversations between students and parents to understand how learning is being managed, where strengths lie and to identify any areas of concern.

If at any time a student feels like they are struggling, they should seek support from the class teacher, Ms O'Malley in Guidance, Ms Byrne in AEN or their Year Head. Loreto College has an excellent system of support which is available to all students should they need it.

With every good wish for the academic year ahead,

Suzanne Lea

Leader of Teaching and Learning