



St. Raphael's College Transition Year Programme

St. Raphael's College Transition Year Programme is a unique, optional one year programme that promotes the personal, social, vocational and educational development of students and prepares them for their role as autonomous, participative, and responsible members of society. St Raphael's College designs its own Transition Year programme and complies with Department of Education & Skills requirements.

Our programme aims to:

- Enable students to develop life skills for their working life.
- Promote the development of personal and social responsibility for their community, both in school and in their local vicinity.
- Develop programmes that allow the students to learn independently and to assist students in taking greater responsibility for their own learning and decision making.
- Encourage the development of a wide range of transferable critical thinking and creative problem solving skills.
- Provide the students with a wide range of opportunities to broaden their educational experiences.
- Encourage students to achieve their potential in subject areas and learning experiences within the programme.
- Provide a transition from Junior to Senior Cycle.
- Facilitate students in making better informed subject choices for Senior Cycle.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum including the provision of additional support in the core subjects where possible.
- Discover and develop their own individual gifts and talents.

Transition Year provides students with a wide range of opportunities to broaden their educational experiences. Students have the opportunity to sample all of the leaving certificate subjects available in the school. They also undertake modules in different subject areas.

Irish	English	Maths
Biology	Physics	Chemistry
Agricultural Science	French	German
Business	Accountancy	Career Guidance
Home Economics	Music	Art

DCG	Construction	Technology
History	Geography	Computers
Physical Education	Religious Education	Social Outreach
Mini Company	Well-Being	Spanish
Work Experience	YSI	Public Speaking
Road Safety	Tourism	Green Schools/ Environmental Studies

Additionally, students have the opportunity to travel abroad on their educational European tour, experience outdoor pursuits, out of school activities, workshops, team building, self-defence, movie making, song school, first aid and CPR, dance, debating, safe pass, coding, website design, driving experience, photography and law to name but a few.

Volunteering

A huge aspect of Transition Year is volunteering with students having the opportunity to work with the elderly in St. Brendan's Community Nursing Unit and with people with disabilities through CASA. They also have opportunities to volunteer with the Family Resource Centre, the GSPCA, in charity shops and with the Tidy Towns. This helps to promote the development of personal and social responsibility for their community but also helps students to develop life skills. Students who choose to complete the Gaisce, John Paul II Awards, Young SVP, the Credit Union Youth Conference and the School Bank give up to six months' voluntary service in the school, wider community and their parish.

TY students also visited the local primary school to teach them the German language, to set up youth choirs in their parishes with students from 5th and 6th class and to talk about 6th class pupils transition from primary to secondary school.

Work Experience

Work experience is a major part of our Transition Year Programme. Students are required to organise their own work experience which takes place every Friday during the school term. Students choose four different work experiences in order to gain experience in different areas of work and employment. This work experience is organised by the students themselves. Students must choose at least two work experience options relating to a possible career choice and the other two options can vary.

In order to ensure its success employers are contacted regularly via telephone or the TY tutor or TY co-ordinator can call to the student's place of work. Employers are also asked to complete a student evaluation form outlining the student's participation and work ethic. This evaluation forms part of the student's end of year certification. Additionally, students are required to complete a work experience evaluation at the end of each work experience block. This is reviewed by the TY tutor and/TY co-ordinator.

Students are expected to be on work experience every Friday and if a student is absent for any reason they must contact their employer and the school outlining the reason for their absence.

Students can also complete a block work experience during the term. Students are required to complete a block work experience form and submit this to the co-ordinator at least three weeks

prior to the commencement date. The TY co-ordinator has the right to refuse this placement if it is deemed unsuitable or if the form is not submitted on time.

Fundraising

The TY students are also involved in fundraising initiatives throughout the school term. The students choose 2/3 charities that they would like to support during the year and decide on appropriate activities to raise money for these charities.

Assessment

Assessment in Transition Year is in keeping with the overall school policy on assessment and it is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. There is an emphasis on assessment for learning and on assessment of learning within the programme. It is an integral part of the TY programme.

Assessment is conducted within each subject by the subject teacher and all aspects of the TY programme are assessed. The type of assessment used is at the discretion of the class teacher. Each student must present at least two forms of assessment to their class teacher and students will be marked on a credit basis. Each student maintains a transition year portfolio into which he/she places completed projects, assignments, reports on modules/subjects/trips/visiting speakers, work experience evaluations and community service/volunteering evaluations or reports. A variety of models of assessment are chosen to complement the variety of approaches used in implementing the programme.

An overview of the assessment methodologies used in transition year include:

- Homework
- Written assessment
- Oral assessment
- Aural assessment
- Practical assessment
- Peer assessment
- Activity based learning
- Project work
- Research work
- Report writing
- Pair work
- Group work
- Oral presentations
- Transition Year journal/diary
- Transition Year portfolio

Students are also encouraged to become active participants in the assessment process through self-assessment and this is logged in the TY journal/portfolio. Students are informed by teachers of the different assessments that will form the basis for their three assessment results and form part of their overall end of year performance certification. Parents are informed of their son/daughters progress through a school report sent home three times a year, in November, February and May. These reports include details of the marks and credits obtained in each subject/module as well as formative feedback from each teacher. Attendance details are also included on these reports and students must obtain 90% attendance to achieve school certification of their completion of the TY programme. Any concerns regarding students' progress or attendance are dealt with by means of telephone communication and meetings with

parents if the need arises. This is done by the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head/TY Co-ordinator.

Transition Year Credit System and Policy

There is a credit system in place to monitor student participation, attendance and behaviour. This credit system is fundamental to student certification at the end of the school year. Each student will be given 200 credits at the beginning of the year. It will be the student's responsibility to keep them. If students lose credits they will forfeit their place to be involved in either in school or out of school activities, such as workshops, activities, European Tour, End-of-Year trip etc. The break down for the credit system is detailed below:

Participation [75 Credits]

This includes in-class participation and extra-curricular participation, such as volunteering, joining committees, Young SVP, Gaisce, John Paul II Awards, Credit Union Youth Advisory Committee etc. the list is exhaustive. Students who do not participate fully in class or outside of class can lose credits. The number of credits lost varies and the co-ordinator/tutor will decide this based on individual teacher feedback.

Attendance/Punctuality/Behaviour [25 Credits]

Note in journal = 2 credits lost

Out of class without permission = 3 credits lost

Discipline slip (this includes a mobile phone slip) = 5 credits lost

Detention = 5 credits lost

Attendance <90% in each term = 5 credits lost

Portfolio [80 Credits]

To be submitted in December [40 credits] and in May [40 credits]. Students who fail to submit their portfolio or do not submit a good quality portfolio twice a year will have credits deducted. 40 credits will be lost each term for a portfolio that is not submitted/ not submitted on time. Failure to submit a good quality portfolio will result in the loss of 20-30 credits.

Work Experience Journal [20 Credits]

To be submitted in December [10 credits] and in May [10 credits]. Students who fail to submit their work experience journal (**including their employer evaluation form**) or do not submit a good quality journal twice a year will have credits deducted. 10 credits will be lost each term for a portfolio that is not submitted/ not submitted on time. Failure to submit a good quality portfolio will result in the loss of 5-8 credits.

Students with less than 175 credits at the end of each term will not be allowed to participate in a workshop or attend an in school or out of school activity. Note: There is an opportunity for students to gain back credits once a term has lapsed. The details of this will be communicated to the student by the co-ordinator.

Transition Year Certification Credit System

Each student can obtain 900 Credits during the course of the three terms.

Assessment 1- November 2019 Assessment 2- February 2020 Assessment 3- May 2020

The credits are applied on the following basis to each individual student. Each teacher chooses at least two pieces of work for each student that will be used as their assessment task; the teacher grades this work and applies the credit system. Class teachers will award these credits. [Attendance, participation, cooperation, completion of homework/tasks/projects].

Each subject has 20 credits each (10 credits for each assessment task). Core subjects: 20 credits each for English, Irish, Maths, French/German, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Agricultural Science, History, Geography, Computers, Business, Accounting, Construction, DCG, Technology, Music, Art, Home Economics, Religious Education, Physical Education.

Each module/other subject has 10 credits each (5 credits for each assessment task). Module/other subjects: 10 credits each for Spanish, Road Safety, Well Being, YSI, Green Schools, Mini Company, Public Speaking, Careers, Tourism, Social Outreach.

As some students may fail to submit an assignment and thus are not entitled to credits it has been decided that a minimum of 2 credits for participation in class is given to students who fail to submit assigned material.

At the end of the school year the TY co-ordinator/tutor will review a student's progress in terms of Participation, Attendance (Minimum of 90%)/Punctuality, Behaviour, Work Experience and their TY Portfolio (to be submitted in December and in May).

Students will be awarded a Certificate of Completion as follows:

Distinction = 600-900 Credits

Merit = 300-600 Credits

Pass = 100-300 Credits

A student who finishes the year with less than 100 Credits will receive a certificate of participation.

Transition Year Induction

Admission to TY is regulated by the TY Admissions Policy, details of which may be viewed on the policies page of this website. We begin our induction process in February/March each year. Each third year class is spoken to by the TY co-ordinator who provides an overview of the Transition Year programme available in the school and a question and answer session from students follows. There are also Transition Year students available to speak to students during the third year subject information evening in the school.

Upon completion of all of the above an information evening is held for third year parents in February/March. This evening coincides with the students and their parents receiving the subject choices forms for fourth year. The TY co-ordinator gives a presentation to parents, providing a general overview of Transition Year, mainly regarding the following:

- Core subjects

- Modules
- Assessment
- Attendance
- Certification
- Work experience and community care
- Student responsibilities for the year
- Activities
- Finance
- Volunteering
- Completion of forms and deadlines.

Application forms are provided to students after the TY co-ordinator has spoken to each year group and are also available to parents after the information evening. The deadline for applications is usually 2 weeks after the information evening. Once a student has shown interest in the programme they receive the school enrolment/admission policy.

Both the students and the parents are informed of the weekly announcements every weekend for the following week through email. These announcements provide information of activities and news for each week during Transition Year. A TY calendar is also available at the start of the school year. The purpose of the calendar will be to inform the parents of key dates, activities and events that will take place during the school year. However, some additional activities may take place during the year and parents will be made aware of these prior to their occurrence. Applicants about whom specific concerns have been voiced by teachers/tutors/year heads will be interviewed prior to being offered a place on the Transition Year Programme. Parents of these students may also be met and concerns discussed before an offer for enrolment is given.

All students are required to sign a contract of participation in the TY programme at the beginning of the school year. If a student is seen to break this contract or if it is deemed that a student due to behaviour/attendance records in TY is not suitable for the programme they will have to continue the school year in fourth year.

Evaluation

St Raphael's College values evaluation as a reflective tool and is a mandatory part of our Transition Year Programme. The main reason for evaluating the TY programme include:

- To facilitate continual improvement to the TY programme.
- To assist with the design of the TY programme.
- To identify and consolidate strengths of the TY programme.
- To help diagnose any difficulties with the TY programme.
- Allows for reflection to take place.
- Keeps the TY programme fresh and updated.
- Improves public relations between the teachers, students and parents.

All aspects of the Transition Year Programme are reviewed regularly and evaluated internally by the co-ordinating team in close co-operation with school management, teachers, students, parents and community interests. Some of the elements that are evaluated regularly include:

- Individual subjects/modules- students are evaluated upon the completion of each term (10/11 weeks) and this evaluation is then assessed and reviewed by management and

the TY co-ordinator. The evaluative process for students will culminate in an end of year interview to assess the student's own contribution to the TY programme.

- Individual workshops, projects etc.- this is completed in the student's journal/diary/portfolio.
- Specific events, including guest speakers, trips etc.- this is completed in the student's journal/diary/portfolio.
- Teachers own teaching style and strategies- teachers are evaluated at the end of each term in order to determine the effectiveness of the subject/module being taught. They also determine their experience of the year.
- Student work experience/community work/volunteering- TY students engage in a weekly/fortnightly evaluation of work experience/community work/volunteering and records this in their journal. At the end of the student's placement or the volunteering process, the employer or personnel evaluates the student's participation and effectiveness in their role.
- The overall effectiveness of the programme- Transition Year students are also evaluated at the end of each term and comment on workshops/activities/subjects/modules etc. undertaken during the term.
- Parents are evaluated at the TY graduation evening/through an online forum at the end of the school year. This evaluation forms the basis for the following years programme.

Online questionnaires/ surveys for parents, teachers and students at the end of each TY term/at the end of the school year.

Students will evaluate the Transition Year programme at the end of the school year by completing a questionnaire followed by discussion with the TY Co-ordinator. Ongoing evaluation by teachers and between teachers and their students is also encouraged. As a result of these evaluations, various elements of the programme or modules have been amended or replaced.

The evaluative process is a crucial aspect of our Transition Year programme. Our approach to evaluation is both qualitative and quantitative. The uptake and participation rates in our programme are indicative of the quality and success of this optional educational programme. Transition Year at our school grows, changes and develops in order to best serve the needs of our students whilst taking into sensitive consideration, the resources of our school community and the families of our students.

TY Activities

A sample of the activities TY students took part during the school year are outlined below:

In School Activities

- Bank of Ireland- School Bank
- Law Workshop
- Public Speaking Workshop
- Movie Maker Workshop
- Song School Workshop
- Poetry Slam Workshop
- Forensic Science Workshop
- GAA coaching with local Primary School – certificated programme
- Spikeball coaching with local Primary School – certificated programme

- Soccer FAI coaching, Kick Start One – certificated programme
- First Aid/CPR
- Garda Road Safety Talk
- Kickboxing/Self-Defence
- Jiving
- Shout Out LGBT Workshop
- Team Building Workshop
- Young SVP
- Gaisce
- Youth Advisory Council
- John Paul II Awards
- Whizz Kids- IT/Coding Workshop
- Disability Workshop
- Soccer League
- Driver Theory Test Preparation
- School Musical
- Photography Workshop
- Irish Language Workshop
- Aware Beat the Blues Workshop

Talks and Visits In

- Cope Galway
- Galway Hospice
- St. Vincent De Paul- Young SVP
- The Road Safety Authority- Road Safety Awareness
- Alcohol and Drug Awareness
- Loughrea Caring and Sharing Association
- Credit Union- Youth Advisory Council
- Bank of Ireland- School Bank
- GSPCA
- Enterprise Ireland
- The Hope Foundation
- John Paul II Award
- Youth Work Ireland
- SEAI Global Schools Talk

Out of School/External Activities

- Educational European School Tour
- Advance Drive- TY Driving Experience
- Musical in the Bord Gais
- National Ploughing Championships
- Enterprise Awards- Mini Company
- Loughrea Enterprise Showcase
- Mountain Biking
- Comhairle na nÓg
- Visit to local primary schools to teach them the German language
- Visit to local primary schools about their transition from primary to secondary school

- French Exchange Programme

Team Building Activities/Bonding Trips for TY

- Bonding Trip in September- Lahinch
- Gaisce Trip in September/March (in the year of the musical)- Lilliput Adventure
- Christmas Ice Skating
- Aran Islands Trip
- TY Ball
- Camping in Lough Key
- Tayto Park- End of Year trip
- Youth Choir

Fundraising Activities for TY

- Team Hope Shoebox Appeal
- Saint Vincent DePaul Food Appeal
- Christmas Craft Fair (Galway Hospice)
- Cake Sale and Coffee Morning (Positive Mental Health Awareness)
- Pieta House Darkness Into Light
- COPE Galway 12 Hour Sleep-In
- Students completed other various fundraising activities as part of their Mini Company projects