

Transition Year Programme – A Guide for Parents & Students

What is Transition Year?

Transition Year (TY) is a unique one-year programme that sits between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. It gives students the time and space to grow as learners, individuals, and active members of their community.

TY focuses on the holistic development of students. It helps young people mature, build confidence, explore interests and careers, and develop skills that prepare them for Senior Cycle, work, and life.

How Students Learn in TY

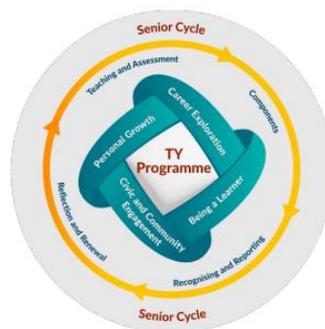
Learning in TY goes beyond textbooks and exams. Students take part in active, experiential learning including:

- Project-based learning
- Work experience and community engagement
- Guest speakers and workshops
- Creative, practical, and collaborative activities
- Reflection through portfolios and self-assessment

The Four Student Dimensions

The TY curriculum and associated activities are designed around four key Student Dimensions:

1. Personal Growth: Confidence, resilience, self-awareness, and wellbeing.
2. Career Development: Communication skills, teamwork, leadership, and respect.
3. Being a Learner: Critical thinking, reflection, goal setting, and independence.
4. Civic and Community Engagement: Community involvement, responsibility, and civic awareness.



These are the key foundations of the TY Programme. They describe how students can develop in TY and the experiences that can support this development. Each Student

Dimension Developmental contain Indicators. While these indicators set out the parameters for the learning and development of the student, students will develop in different ways and to varying degrees across each of the indicators. In this sense, they also serve as reflective guidance for students. The Student Experiences provides possible opportunities and contexts to support student learning and development consistent with the developmental indicators. These are not intended to be exhaustive but to offer guidance to schools in their planning.

PERSONAL GROWTH	BEING A LEARNER	CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	CAREER EXPLORATION
<p>Developmental Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> becoming more assured and confident about themselves as a person taking greater care of the health and wellbeing of themselves and others setting and reviewing goals for personal development and achievement having greater capacity to negotiate ethical dilemmas and reflect on personal values knowing how to make more informed decisions persevering longer with tasks, especially when challenging coming to see challenges as further opportunities for growth adapting better to groups and new social environments interacting with others with more empathy, both in person and online increasingly taking ownership of their own behaviours and decisions showing more initiative and leadership in school, at home and in the community. 	<p>Developmental Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> being more motivated to learn and seeing education as worthwhile and enjoyable setting learning goals and reviewing them regularly becoming more skilled with digital technologies, both as a user and a creator exploring their own personal interests having a greater appreciation of lifelong learning being more willing to learn from mistakes and expand their comfort zone acquiring more knowledge and skills relevant to senior cycle seeing the importance of feedback and placing more value on it increasing their capacity for independent and self-regulated learning being more open to trying a range of learning strategies broadening their communication and presentation skills expressing their own ideas more clearly while engaging with other people's ideas. 	<p>Developmental Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustaining more caring and respectful relationships with people, place and nature having a greater appreciation and respect for human dignity and diversity deepening their awareness and sense of empathy, identity and belonging recognising and engaging with complexity and uncertainty taking actions to live more sustainably showing more initiative in their schools, communities, and society setting and reviewing goals for being an active citizen working more co-operatively with others and in teams becoming more involved with creative and cultural activities wanting to contribute to a more just world understanding better the interconnections of local, national, and global communities. 	<p>Developmental Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> being more informed on the links between education and career opportunities increasing their awareness of personal interests, aptitudes, values, and dispositions identifying and reviewing career-related goals more regularly having a greater capacity to research and critically reflect upon career pathways acquiring more vocational, organisational and communication skills learning how to generate ideas and turn ideas into action improving their workplace knowledge and behaviours through first-hand experience having more awareness of the world of work and enterprise
<p>Student Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborative projects, competitions, activities over the year to achieve collective goals individual tasks and projects, involving digital and non-digital skills to enable self-expression guided creation of a portfolio that captures their personal growth education and guidance in personal and emotional development and social awareness activities and experiences promoting lifelong physical and emotional health opportunities for guided reflection and review of personal goals formal and informal opportunities to speak and present in class, in public and in interviews recognition of personal growth and personal challenges in all aspects of school life during the year 	<p>Student Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> certainty subjects and sampling of subjects with learning designed to develop senior cycle key competences a variety of pedagogies consistent with realising the aims of the Programme Statement and supporting developmental indicators for all students meaningful learning opportunities that incorporate student input opportunities to build on student learning in the transition from junior to senior cycle assessment of their learning and development through a variety of forms such as teacher, peer and self-assessment, and for formative and summative purposes recognition of achievement across all areas of the curriculum guided creation of a portfolio that captures development of the student and their progress as a learner a range of individual and team projects, competitions, activities over the year that are manageable and appropriately challenging 	<p>Student Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> working with local or national organisations and businesses over the year opportunities to volunteer through community work and social placement education on sustainable development, including a meaningful action for a more sustainable world sharing of knowledge and skills within the school community and among community stakeholders guided creation of a portfolio that captures their civic and community engagement projects, competitions, activities in the classroom, in school, at home, in local communities and in society meaningful involvement with shaping school culture learning opportunities around empathy, diversity, and inclusion 	<p>Student Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work placements during the year guided reflective tasks on their experiences and placements in TY subjects and modules on the senior cycle curriculum that link to a range of future pathways career guidance and classroom support on a range of future pathways guided creation of a portfolio capturing their reflections on career exploration a variety of learning opportunities that improve practical and vocational skills access to career-related events or learning environments guest speakers from a diversity of backgrounds and careers short, certified courses or micro-credentials opportunities for assessing aptitudes and

Curriculum

Taster Subjects – Try It Before You Choose It

Transition Year gives students the chance to step outside the traditional classroom and sample a wide variety of subjects before making final choices for Senior Cycle. Taster subjects are short, engaging modules designed to let students explore new areas of learning, discover hidden talents, and gain a clearer picture of where their strengths and interests lie.

From practical, hands-on subjects like Woodwork, Home Economics, and Business, to creative and technical fields like Art, Computer Science, or Physics, tasters give students the opportunity to try out new skills in a low-pressure environment.

The goal is simple: to help every student make more informed decisions about Leaving Cert subject choices, while also broadening their horizons and boosting confidence along the way.

Taster subjects may include Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Accounting, Computer Science, Art, Music, Engineering, Woodwork, Home Economics, Politics and Society, Geography and Agricultural Science.

Elective Subjects

One of the most exciting parts of Transition Year is the chance to dive into Elective Modules – unique, hands-on experiences that lets students shape their TY journey around what interests them most.

At the start of the year, students hear pitches from different modules – almost like a mini “menu of opportunities.” From there, the choice is theirs to engage in what they see themselves committing to and investing in for the year. Whether they see themselves whipping up dishes in Master Chef, performing on stage in Musical Theatre, unleashing creativity through META Music and META Art, or making a difference with Active School Flags, Road Safety, or Peer Education, there’s something to spark everyone’s interest.

These modules are about more than just fun – they’re a chance to discover passions, develop new skills, and challenge students in ways that the usual classroom doesn’t always allow. With so many options, every student has the chance to try something fresh, exciting, and completely different.

Assessment in TY

Assessment in TY is supportive and developmental. There are no state exams. Instead, students are assessed through:

- An e-Portfolio of Learning
- Reflection and self-evaluation
- Teacher feedback
- Presentations, interviews, or celebrations of learning throughout the year
- Credits earned based on criteria in each subject, module and elective.

TY e-Portfolio

Each student creates a TY e-Portfolio that captures their journey through the year. This includes goals, reflections, achievements, and evidence of learning across the four Student Dimensions. This portfolio captures the student’s journey through and engagement with opportunities met throughout the year and is a vital part of their assessment at the end of the year.

Why TY Matters

TY helps students return to senior cycle more confident, motivated, and prepared. Students develop real-world skills, explore career interests, and gain a deeper understanding of themselves. TY is a valuable investment in personal growth, wellbeing, and lifelong learning.