

DUNDALK GRAMMAR SCHOOL



TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME 2023-2024



INTRODUCTION

Transition Year (TY) is a one-year school-based programme between Junior and Senior Cycle. It is designed to act as a bridge between the two, facilitating smooth transition from the more dependent learning of Junior Cycle to the more independent self-directed learning required for Senior Cycle.

The Transition Year programme at Dundalk Grammar School, first introduced back in September 1991, has developed over the years to meet the changing needs of our students, as well as incorporating the latest teaching methodologies. Our overall objective is to promote the personal, social, educational, and vocational development of our students, and prepare them for their future role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society.

The booklet is designed to give both students and parents an overview of our programme. It details the information on the Transition Year Curriculum, modes of assessment and the supportive role that parents can play in helping their son/daughter to maximise the numerous opportunities that the year offers.

If there are any specific questions regarding any aspect of the Transition Year programme, please do not hesitate in contacting the coordinator or any member of the Transition Year Core Group at the school.

THE TRANSITION YEAR TEAM 2023-2024

Headmaster – Mr Jonathan Graham

Deputy Principal – Mr Enda Murphy

Year Head – Mr Declan Hynes

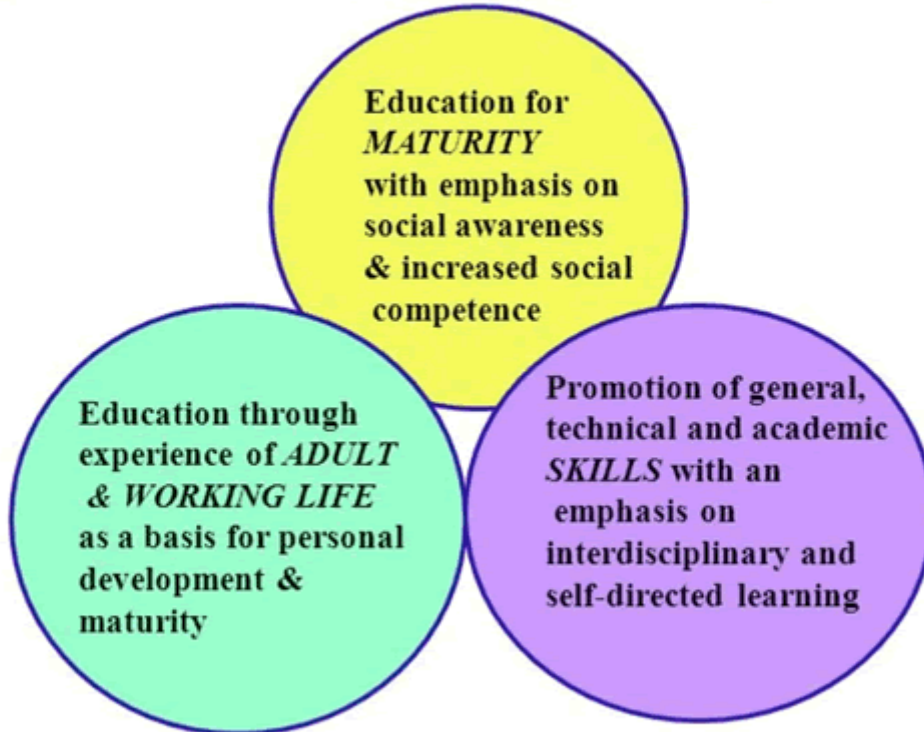
TY Coordinator – Ms Sharon Brown (ty@dgs.ie)

Career Guidance – Mr Alan Norton (guidance@dgs.ie)

Community Care – Ms Aisling McGuire

Enterprise & YSI – Mr Paul Brady

AIMS of Transition Year



Transition Year can give you an opportunity to:

- Develop a variety of new skills
- Discover more about your own natural skills and talents
- Learn more about working as part of a team
- Discover more about job and career opportunities beyond school

- Sample and discover new subjects
- Catch up on learning missed out during Junior Cycle
- Build a solid foundation of skills for the Leaving Certificate
- Undertake projects on topics that interest you

- Make informed choices about Leaving Certificate subjects
- Learn more about the working world through work experience
- Improve your skills in relating to other people
- Practice and develop oral presentation skills

- Practice meeting deadlines and improve time management skills
- Visit third-level colleges and other workplaces
- Learn through meeting people beyond the classroom
- Explore new pastimes and extra-curricular activities

- Add a valuable set of experiences and qualifications to your CV
- Become a more independent learner
- Develop more mature student-teacher relationships
- Learn about leadership, co-operation and dealing with conflict

- Engage in civic, social and political issues and form opinions
- Explore the possibilities offered by computers and IT
- Take part in outdoor pursuits
- Become a more mature person

TRANSITION YEAR CURRICULUM 2023-2024

In Transition Year the academic calendar is divided into 4 modules, each one being 7- 8 weeks duration. Students will complete courses in each of the following subjects during the year:

CORE SUBJECTS

English

Maths

Irish

Modern Foreign Languages

Core subjects are on the TY timetable for the duration of the year.

SUBJECT SAMPLING

Accounting

Art

Business

Economics

History

Music

Physics

Agricultural Science

Biology

Chemistry

Geography

Home Economics

Physical Education

Politics



TY SPECIFIC SUBJECTS

Computers/IT

ICDL is now essential for many careers and occupations. Students will work towards completing all stages of their ICDL as part of the TY programme.

Students who have already completed ICDL as part of Junior Cert IT class will study Computer Programming.

Fitness/Outdoor Activity

Students will take part in several activities including swimming, indoor soccer, circuit-training, aerobics, gym, yoga, dance, taekwondo, and self-defence programme etc.

The programme is run in conjunction with Aura Swimming Pool & Gym, Krav Maga Studio, The Gym, DKIT Soccerdome, Academy Dance Studio, Dundalk Yoga Collective Studio.

There is an additional charge for these activities.

Arts & Crafts

Junk Kouture competition will also be offered subject to a sufficient number of students expressing an interest.

Community Care

Practical First Aid

Road Safety

Film Studies

Sociology

Sound Engineering

Drama

Sign Language

Mindfulness

Health Education



TY OPTION SUBJECTS

DIY Skills/Drone Racing/ Young Social Innovators/Hospitality/ Construction/PE - Games

Students must choose ONE option for the duration of the year.

DIY Skills - It has been proven that “learning by doing” is an effective way to enhance problem solving and communication skills. This course will provide the opportunity for students to challenge themselves in areas that they may have little experience of. They will unleash their creativity, while working on their projects in a relaxed, guided, and supervised environment.



Drone Racing—Drone Racing involves a mini camera mounted on your drone streaming live video, giving the pilot first person view of the action! This competition involves designing and assembling your own FPV Drones. Using hi spec goggles and a mini camera on top of your drone, whizz around obstacles, LED gates and other competitors as you hurtle towards the finish line! Not only will you learn how to design and build your own drone, but you will also master controlling it at speeds of up to 185 Km/hr.

Students in this module get to learn about basic forces, electronics, coding, 3D design and manufacturing methods. It also includes some practical mathematics and physics. In terms of the business side of this competition, students will demonstrate managerial tasks, financial management and marketing roles. This gives more options for students to do more than just engineering based roles.



TY OPTION SUBJECTS

Young Social Innovators – This programme offers students the opportunity to create team-based action projects on issues they care about, putting their innovative ideas into action to bring about positive social change for the benefit of people, communities, and the environment. <https://www.youngsocialinnovators.ie/>

Hospitality - offers students the opportunity to experience the business of catering and running a coffee shop. This option will offer participants a rewarding, exciting, fulfilling, and challenging experience throughout the whole of transition year. The basic requirement is for students to be enthusiastic, energetic, and motivated to make a tangible difference in the lives of other people, whether in or out of school.



Games—including hockey, soccer, tennis, rugby, badminton, basketball, volleyball, table-tennis, athletics, ultimate frisbee etc...



Construction—practical based subject. Junior Cycle Woodwork is not essential. This subject is suitable for students that wish to make small projects during TY. It also provides the basic skills and knowledge needed should students wish to choose Construction at Leaving Cert



ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

EQUINE STUDIES at Oaktree Stables, Ravensdale, Dundalk.



This course is designed to be educational and have the element of fun involved with a sporting activity. Students will cover stable management and horse riding. This option is dependent on a sufficient number of students choosing to take the course.

There is an additional charge for participants.

SAILING at Carlingford Marina.

Participants should achieve the Irish Sailing Association (ISA) Level 1 sailing certificate by the end of this course.

The above course is designed to be enjoyable and fun for all, at the same time imparting new life-long skills to the participants in a pleasant environment. Team building will also feature highly.

This option is dependent on a sufficient number of students choosing to take the course.

There is an additional charge for participants.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Gaisce is an old Irish word which means ‘a great achievement’ and it is in the spirit of this meaning that the programme challenges young people to set and pursue personal goals in four different areas of activity:

- * Community Involvement
- * Personal Skills
- * Physical Recreation
- * Adventure Journey

During Transition Year, many students take up the challenge of **Gaisce**. The award is designed to acknowledge students that have demonstrated excellent leadership and teamwork while undertaking activities that are community based. (www.gaisce.ie)



Wild Summits School Expedition Programme

(Tuesday 5th September 2023 – Wednesday 6th September 2023)

The Wild Summits School Expedition Programme offers students a true outdoor educational experience. Students will have autonomy by planning and executing their own expedition in one of Ireland's beautiful landscapes.

The programme will allow for learning from start to finish. Students will learn about map reading, environmental issues, autonomy in the hills and touch on the geography curriculum. Each student will have their own tent and will be provided with their own backpack.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



1 DAY FIELD TRIP – CAUSEY FARM

(Monday 11th September 2023)

The trip will consist of different team activities such as Sheep Herding, Bog Jumping, Rafting, Bodhrán workshop, and Pizza making. The aim is to help the students improve communication, develop leadership & delegation, increase co-operation, build relationships, improve performance, discover problem solving abilities and of course have a wonderful day out on the farm.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



TY BARISTA TRAINING & ONLINE COURSE

Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th & Thursday 28th September 2023

Students will receive a full day's training on the following;

Course Content

- Understanding the Espresso Equipment
- Espresso Technique
- Understanding the Coffee Grinder
- Milk Chemistry & Milk Texturing Techniques
- Intro to Latte Art Designing
- Understanding the Coffee Menu
- Simulated Café Workflow
- Machine Cleaning

Upon completion of the online course after onsite training, students will receive certification from Dublin Barista School.



TY FIRST DRIVE – SPRING TERM 2024

The **1st Drive** Transition Year driving course is specifically aimed at students who are under the qualifying age to hold a learner's permit but who want to learn to drive and eventually sit their driving test. As each participant takes a turn behind the wheel, the purpose built 2.4km road network allows experienced driving instructors to guide students through the skills required to deal with the dangers of today's busy roads.

Students will also learn some practical skills, like how to change a wheel, check oil and water, etc.

The students will also be shown the benefits of ABS braking and how even a small increase in speed can be dangerous.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Food & Beverage course & online access to Level 1 Food Safety course

(Thursday 19th October 2023)

The Food & Beverage course, run by *TY courses Ireland* is designed to prepare students to work within the Hospitality Industry with essential knowledge and practical skills required in respect of the day-to-day Food & Beverage operations. It is run with the backing of the Restaurant Association of Ireland and Failte Ireland. The course is accredited.

It is a full day of practical skills training which will take place at the school. The course organisers also help the students get placements/work at the end of the course, as they have a link with the members of the RAI and Failte Ireland.

The Level 1 Awards in Food Safety provide an ideal solution to induction training including:

- New employees with minimal or no prior food safety knowledge;
- Employees handling low-risk or wrapped foods (category A);
- Front of house employees, such as waiting or check out staff;
- Back of house employees, such as kitchen porters or warehouse staff.



**TY TRIP TO DELPHI ADVENTURE CENTRE,
LEENANE, CO. GALWAY**

(Monday 20th May 2023 – Thursday 23rd May 2024)



TY students will spend the last week of their academic year participating in activities that include archery, surfing, orienteering, high & low ropes course, zip wire, and team building activities specifically designed for the transition year student.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Visiting Speakers
- TY Workshops
- Day Trips
- Trade Fairs
- Community Outreach
- Competitions



STUDY ABROAD

Some students may wish to take time out during the year to attend school in another country. Students planning to do so must consult with the school well in advance to investigate when it could take place to minimise any disruption for the student concerned and for the learning programme at school.

Time away from school must be sanctioned by the Headmaster.



TY WORK EXPERIENCE

Students are requested to undertake **three** separate work placements. This exercise is hugely beneficial as it enables each individual to discover their own personal strengths. In addition, it provides the students with an opportunity to gain an insight into different occupational backgrounds, which will assist them in making informed subject and career choices during Leaving Certificate.



It is the responsibility of students, with support from parents/guardian to secure work placement. Parents are asked to help ensure students meet deadlines for submission of placement details.

The school must be provided with details of **ALL** work experience placements on the *‘Confirmation of Placement Form’* at least 3 weeks in advance.

Please see www.dgs.ie/academic/transition-year-4th-year-secondary/transition-year-work-experience for all necessary documents.

The dates for next years’ TY Work Placements are:-

- 1. 27th November 2023 – 1st December 2023**
- 2. 19th February 2024 – 23rd February 2024**
- 3. 13th May 2024 – 17th May 2024**

There are NO classes for TY students during these weeks.

TY WORK EXPERIENCE



Certain organisations will have set dates for work placement which may not be at the same times—these should be negotiated with the TY coordinator and will be facilitated where possible. Please see <http://TY.ie> for more details on work placement programmes.



Work placement letters and forms can be downloaded from the school website to facilitate students getting placements organised in good time as the earlier arrangements are made, the easier it will be to find appropriate and valuable placements. For each work experience, students must complete a work placement report and submit this to the school.

Boarding students may travel to work placement from school if they wish or may organise a placement close to their home. Boarders who do not secure work placement will not be allowed to stay in school during that time.

TY CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME

All TY students have a designated weekly career guidance class as part of their timetable. The aim of the guidance programme is essentially to facilitate students in starting their career planning. Vocational Guidance aspects in module one includes looking at the idea of a career and the associated tasks involved in job-hunting including CV preparation and Interview Techniques. Module two focuses on each students' individual aptitudes and skill set. Module 3 looks at Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate and in the fourth and final Module we examine the various college application systems and the costs associated with going to college.

As part of the Guidance Programme in TY we use the REACH+ Programme which provides students with a workbook and a series of online resources, in their individual career file. This programme was developed and is supported by CareersPortal.ie. and is used by students from TY until the end of their 6th Year. As the school purchases the textbooks and the online licences for the REACH+ Programme this does not appear on the school booklist for TY, however the cost, which works out at €20 (2023/2024) will be added to the school invoices at the start of the new academic year.

A brief outline of the REACH+ Programme can be found at the following link

<https://careersportal.ie/ccount/click.php?id=75>

Information dissemination to students is facilitated using a TY Edmodo Class Group. Details of Work Placements on offer, College Open Events and other career/subject related resources are regularly posted to the class group.

Parents are also directed to the DGS Career Guidance Website where lots of resources including our monthly careers bulletins can be accessed. Follow the link

https://careersportal.ie/careerguidance/office.php?school_id=528

I look forward to working with each student in this unique year filled with some many opportunities to further develop their skills set and C.V.

Alan Norton.

School Guidance Counsellor.

TY PEER MENTORING PROGRAMME



In the summer of 2022, we developed a new initiative for our TY students enabling them to build on their leadership skills through participation in a school based mentoring programme.

Mindful of the experiences of first-year students in making the transition from primary to secondary school, this programme provided 26 TY students with the opportunity to mentor our in-coming first year students.

TY Mentors undertook a full day's training facilitated by Caroline O'Connor (founder of EiSHT – Emotionally intelligent, Skilled, Happy Teens) before the school year commenced. Each mentor was assigned 3 students and supported them through the delivery of an 8-week programme as part of SPHE. In addition, the TY Mentors had regular contact with their first-year groups at break and lunchtimes.

Given the positive feedback from our students and parents we plan to offer this opportunity to TY students for the new academic year. Places are limited to 30 students and training will take place in August for those who intend to participate.

ASSESSMENT

HOMEWORK POLICY

Although Transition Year is different from other years in terms of its structure and the subjects offered, students will get assignments and are expected to do it. This takes many forms including:

Written Work
Reading

Learning Work
Investigative Work

Individual projects
Team based projects

TY PORTFOLIO

Students will submit a Portfolio as part of their assessment. It will contain evidence of work from different areas of the programme, e.g. Work Experience, Core Subjects, Module Subjects, Option Subjects, TY Trips etc.

EXAMINATIONS

While there are no formal house exams during Transition Year, teachers will often set class or end of module tests, particularly in some Core Subjects.

REPORTS

Transition Year students will receive a school report in January and June.



THE CREDITS SYSTEM

On completion of subjects within each module, teachers will award students a number of credits based on their application and standard of work.

The total number of credits awarded is documented in each report that is sent home.

The average number of credits a student is expected to achieve over the course of 4 modules is 3000.



Students can also earn extra credits for:-

- Sport
- Musical
- Extra-curricular activities, e.g. Choir, Orchestra
- Contributing to school life, e.g. student council
- Trade Fairs
- Fund Raising
- Taking part in school events, e.g. Open Day
- Exceptional interest in a subject
- Competitions, e.g. Sci-fest, Student Enterprise Awards
- Debating
- Barista course
- Tooth Led-Teens
- Peer Education
- TY First Drive

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP AND SUPPORT THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IN TRANSITION YEAR:

- Encourage your son/daughter to make the most of the Transition Year Programme. It really is a year from which the benefits accrued directly relate to the effort put into it.
- Demonstrate as much interest in your child's daily educational activities as you would when s/he is following the Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate Programme.
- Familiarise yourself with all the "extra" and optional opportunities the school plans to provide during the year. Students may only convey what they are interested in to their parents and many valuable opportunities may be overlooked. Sometimes parents only discover what was on offer at the end of the year.
- Acclimatise yourself to having a student who will not necessarily have traditional "homework". Transition Year opens doors to "other ways of learning". The TY student will tend to have other forms of homework. S/he may have projects to complete questionnaires and surveys to conduct or oral presentations to prepare. S/he may need a helping hand from you at home.
- If you have an area of interest, local politics, or an expertise in a particular area e.g., interview skills, perhaps you would consider offering your services to the TY Core Group.



USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.smartfutures.ie

www.careersportal.ie

www.tcd.ie/study/eu/undergraduate/transition-year-programmes

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