



DOMINICAN COLLEGE MUCKROSS PARK



**TRANSITION YEAR
2025/2026**

A GUIDE

THE TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME

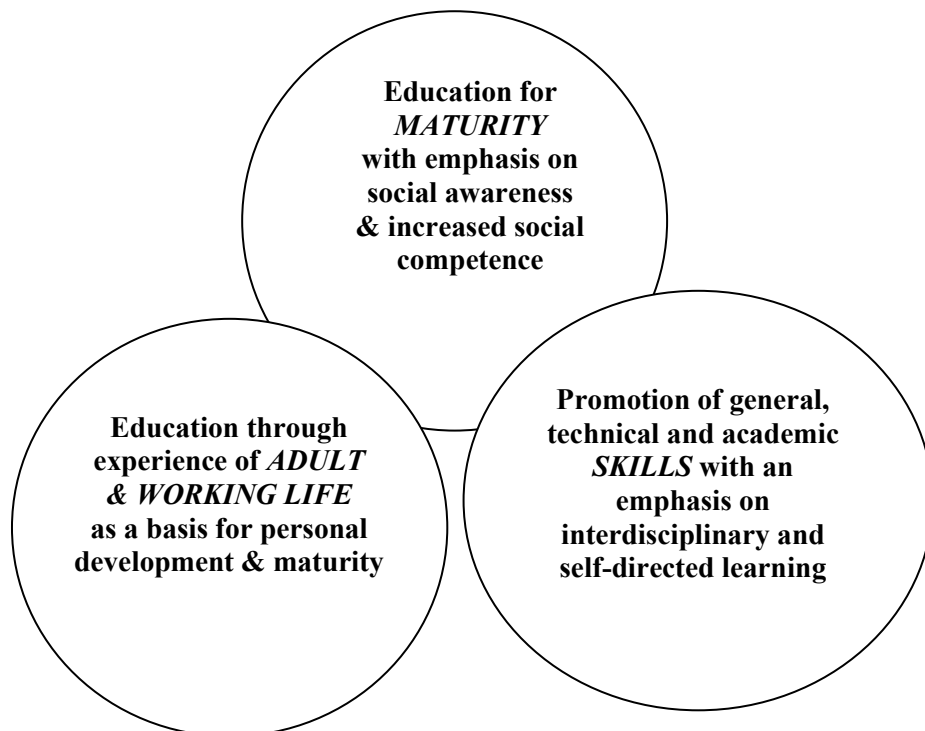
Transition Year provides a bridge between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. It offers broad educational experiences promoting the personal, social, spiritual and vocational development of each pupil. Transition Year provides a unique opportunity which is of benefit to every pupil who participates.

In Dominican College Muckross Park all pupils are obliged to take Transition Year after completing their Junior Cycle.

- The Transition Year offers pupils space to learn, mature and develop
- The Department of Education and Science encourages each school to design its own Transition Year programme to meet the needs of its pupils.
- The Transition Year programme in Muckross Park College offers pupils a broad variety of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.
- Throughout TY, our teachers are encouraged to promote activity-based, research and self-directed learning.
- Transition Year, like each other year of a six-year cycle through second-level schooling, has its own unique contribution to make to each pupil's development and education.
- Pupils are encouraged to see TY as providing opportunities to discover personal strengths and to develop their potential.
- In addition to traditional style homework, TY pupils are also asked to undertake projects, assignments, interviews, research and other demanding tasks.
- The Transition Year programme assists the pupils in connecting with adult and working life through the provision of work experience and fundraising activities.
- While TY presents opportunities to learn without the pressure of external examinations, assessment is an essential part of our TY programme. In Dominican College Muckross Park we use varied forms of assessment

such as: written, practical, oral and aural, portfolio or project displays, exhibitions of work, personal logs, etc. Pupils themselves have input into the assessment procedure.

The Aims of Transition Year



According to the NCCA a school's TY programme should:

1. Nurture the development of the student as a whole person by building on their previous experiences, through a curriculum designed by the school that is aligned to the TY Programme Statement.
2. Create space and opportunities for meaningful, enjoyable learning experiences through which the key competencies of students can be developed in the classroom and school, in the home and local community and in their roles as national and global citizens.

3. Expand the student’s experience and awareness of diverse future pathways and nurture the student’s capacity to sustain their growth and development through a process of lifelong learning.
4. Evolve continuously to meet the needs of the student through an evidence-informed reflection and renewal process, involving students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and community partners.

*‘An effective TY programme, **which will be unique to each school**, is one where every aspect of the curriculum serves to develop the student in harmony with the Student Dimensions’. (NCCA 2024)*

SKILLS that can be developed in Transition Year:

➤ Observation	➤ Organisation
➤ Planning	➤ Technical abilities
➤ Communication	➤ Independent thinking
➤ Negotiation	➤ Record keeping
➤ Interviewing	➤ Presentation
➤ Listening	➤ Assessment
➤ Co-operation	➤ Evaluation
➤ Teamwork	➤ Time management
➤ Research	Etc.
➤ Analysis	
➤ Decision making	

The four Student Dimensions outlined below are the foundation for our TY programme.

Student Dimension	Description
Personal Growth	Students develop socially and emotionally over the course of the year in areas that include health and wellbeing, autonomy, identity, empathy and leadership.
Being a Learner	Building on the junior cycle experience, students begin to develop as senior cycle students, embracing opportunities and strategies for learning that work best for the student now and into the future.
Civic and Community Engagement	Shaped by their personal values, students make a positive difference in their schools, communities and society. They learn to act on their responsibilities and exercise their rights as local, national and global citizens in ethical and sustainable ways.
Career Readiness	Students can explore future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing practical skills and career-related knowledge.

A combination of core learning, subject sampling, TY specific modules and other components provides a balanced and broad set of experiences which encompasses the Student Dimensions

CORE LEARNING

All pupils will attend core subjects which provide a bridge between the Junior and Leaving Cert Syllabi as well as providing the opportunity to explore many new topics and areas of study.

They include the following:

- English
- Irish

- Mathematics
- History
- Geography
- Science
- I.C.D.L (International Computer Driving License)
- Business Programme
- Languages
- Religion
- P.E.
- S.P.H.E.
- Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture

SUBJECT SAMPLING

Pupils will sample a number of subjects, which will rotate as the year progresses. (These subjects vary each year and may be slightly different to those listed below)

***‘Modules’ include subjects sampled by all pupils.**

Module Group 1 (Monday Morning)

A	B	C	D	E
Fitness	Craft	Music App	Chemical Analysis	Self Defense

Module Group 2

A	B	C	D	E
Science	Introduction to Knitting	Introduction to Italian	Car Maintenance And DIY	Human Anatomy

Module Group 3

P	Q	R	S	T
History of Fashion	Art	Animal Care	Applied Science	Physics for Life

Module Group 4

P	Q	R	S	T
Horticulture	The Great Muckross Bake off	Engineering	Creative Writing	Tag Rugby

OPTIONS (Once a week)

***Pupils choose an option to pursue from Sep-Dec and then another from Jan-May (with the exception of Yearbook- if chosen, this is a whole year subject)**

Avoca Home Cookery	Choreography	Yearbook	International Cookery	Creative Practices
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****Modules and options may be subject to change depending on teacher/timetable allocations***

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Social Work

Pupils are encouraged to volunteer some of their time to help those less fortunate than themselves. Every pupil should participate at least once a week in some form of ‘Social work’ activity and those who do so can participate in the school’s Gaisce Programme.

Fund Raising

A number of fund-raising initiatives will take place during the year. These initiatives allow the development of various skills and an appreciation of the importance of charitable behaviour in our society.

Gaisce

The President’s Award is Ireland’s very own National Challenge Award, one of our most prestigious and respected individual award programmes, and a challenge from the President of Ireland, to the nation’s future.

The President’s Award works on the basis of a personal challenge set by the pupils. They will set the challenge and agree it with the President’s Award leader. Each challenge is completely individual, so the only person the pupils will compete with is themselves.

There are 4 different activity areas. To earn an award, the pupil must take part in each of the four areas. They might decide to build on an activity they’ve tried in the past. Each participant must participate in at least one new activity to earn an award. This award programme is optional, although it is highly recommended and requires a high level of commitment from each pupil involved

The Four challenge areas are:

- 1. Skill**
- 2. Community**
- 3. Physical**
- 4. Adventure**

Junior Achievement Awards

Junior Achievement Ireland is a major collaborative effort between schools, students and teachers, business volunteers and sponsoring organisations. The Programme enables young people to learn about business by experiencing it first hand from professionals. It promotes leadership and communication skills. Each pupil will have the opportunity of completing this course in their Business Programme class.

Guest Speakers

During the year pupils will have the opportunity of attending a guest speaker. As well as visitors discussing a variety of topics; from social outreach to career advice, guest speakers can include representatives from the following organisations:

Mary Gearty- Criminal Barrister

Dolores Corcoran- Make up and deportment tips

Forensic Science workshop

Barnardos

AWARE

Redress

SOAR

Career Talks.....etc.

(Any contacts/assistance you may be able to provide in relation to guest speakers is greatly appreciated.)

Annual activities that embrace the various Student Dimensions:

Dublin Culture Week

The Aim of this week is for each pupil to get to know their city on cultural, historical and social levels. A full timetable will be planned and pupils will be supervised at each of the sites they visit. Maps will be provided and pupils will be required to complete several assignments on the sites visited. Pupils must always remain in groups of at least four and full attendance at all the organised activities is expected. It is hoped that this event can go ahead this year as planned, keeping in mind restrictions that may be in place

‘My Eirquest’ and ‘My Aptitude’ assessment.

These will be carried out during the year by the schools Guidance Counsellor.

My Eirquest assessment reveals a picture of the student's stronger career and academic interests, related abilities and personal qualities. My Aptitude accesses seven aptitudes: Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, Spatial Reasoning, Spelling, Arithmetic Calculation and Working Quickly and Accurately. These results are relevant in making university course and career decisions and they also explore a student's thinking and learning styles. These assessments are used to assist students in recognising their strengths and so aid them in making their subject choice for the Leaving Certificate.

Retreat

A retreat will take place during the school year and provides an opportunity for introspection and reflection on the part of the pupils. This is an extremely beneficial day and all pupils are required to attend.

Outings

A number of outings will take place during the year to further enhance the Transition Year experience. These can include (but are not limited to): Hikes, Museum and Gallery visits, Cinema trips, Hospital talks, career exhibitions Etc.

CAREER READINESS

Work Experience/Social Work Experience

One of the most important aspects of our TY programme is Work Experience.

'Work experience' involves spending time as part of the school course, learning at first-hand about life in a workplace. In Muckross Park College There are three 'Work experience' weeks during the Year. Two of these are general 'Work experience' weeks, whereas, in the third, pupils are

required to secure placement in an organisation that provides ‘Social Outreach’ (in its various forms) to the community.

The employer agrees to co-operate with the school in taking on a pupil for a one-week work experience placement and pupils are indemnified by the school’s insurer; Allianz.

The three designated weeks are:

WORK EXPERIENCE WEEKS 2025/2026

Week 1 Nov 3rd – Nov 7th 2025

Week 2 Feb 9th – Feb 13th 2026

Week 3 May 18th – May 22nd 2026

It is very important to note that, where possible, no work experience should be organised outside of the designated weeks.

We have found the practice of girls doing extra Work Experience to be highly disruptive to their (and other pupils’) learning and it is damaging to the integrity of the TY programme as a whole. Absence from school, except where officially sanctioned, will be recorded as such and may have detrimental consequences with regard to future subject choices/placements in senior cycle and may affect the allocation of roles of responsibility in sixth year.

Insurance forms that may be required from employers are available on the TY website (the ‘Downloads’ section of the TY website)

Parents and Pupils need to be aware that:

- The placement is part of the school course and offers a great learning opportunity.
- The employer - who has an enterprise to run - is co-operating with the student with limited direct benefit to the enterprise.
- Both employer and student will complete a report at the end of the placement.

- These reports will become important documents for future reference.

Getting the Best from Work Experience

To get the most from a work experience placement, it is worth thinking in terms of **three** stages. For a pupil to get maximum benefit, it is important that each stage goes well.

The three stages are:

1. PREPARATION

- *Searching* for a placement which will suit their interests.
- *Presenting* themselves to the employer and making a good case for themselves.
- *Understanding* what the employer expects from them.

2. PLACEMENT

- *Turning up* in good time.
- *Presenting* themselves appropriately.
- *Following* the instructions given by their supervisor.
- *Performing* the given tasks.
- *Getting on* with the other workers.
- *Dealing* with people in a friendly and courteous way.

3. REFLECTION

- *Thinking* about the placement.
- *Talking* about the placement with family members and friends.
- *Writing* a report on their placement.
- *Discussing* their work experience in class and with their teachers.
- *Clarifying*, in the light of their placement, plans for further work experience, for studying and for the future.

The four Curriculum Dimensions provide the scaffolding to realise the ambition of the Student Dimensions:

Curriculum Dimension	Description
Components	A combination of core learning, subject sampling, TY specific modules and other components provides a balanced and broad set of experiences which encompasses the Student Dimensions.
Teaching and Assessment	Appropriate and effective pedagogies, alongside ongoing assessment, support students to progress in their learning while also enabling the renewal of classroom practice.
Recognising and Reporting	The means by which student learning and achievement in all areas of the TY programme are affirmed and celebrated. Reporting in TY provides a broad picture across all the Student Dimensions.
Reflection and Renewal	Reviewing, evaluating and updating the TY programme, in a continuous and inclusive manner, enables schools to evolve the TY programme most suited to the developmental and learning needs of their students.

ASSESSMENT OF TRANSITION YEAR

Pupils will be required to complete various assessments as they progress through Transition Year

How Assessment works:

In order for pupils to gain any benefit from Transition Year it is important that they set goals for themselves and try their best to achieve these goals. Each year in school the pupils are assessed to see, in what areas they are making progress in and in what areas they may need to improve. Normally this is done solely by their teachers but Transition Year is different.

In Transition Year, the person who has most responsibility, as to whether or not they will achieve is the pupils themselves.

Assessment is a means by which they can track their progress through Transition Year, making sure they remember the goals they have set for themselves and giving the pupils a chance to reflect on their experiences.

Overall assessment of a pupil's participation in TY will be assessed by way of a Google Site (website) that will document their participation in an E-Portfolio format. This is publicly viewable to those with the URL of the site.

A Portfolio will provide us with concrete evidence of progress and achievements, which the pupil can discuss, review and share with teachers, parents and peers as appropriate.

Examples of types of evidence of learning that might be included in this portfolio are:

written work, project work, homework, charts, diagrams, photographs, audio or video recordings of your participation in an activity, event or achievement recordings of work in the arts Etc.

This portfolio- along with an interview at the end of the year by a teacher will form the basis for end of year certification.

Free time can be used to work on this portfolio

FIFTEEN IMPORTANT POINTS FOR PARENTS

1 Transition Year is focused on promoting maturity. It recognises that 15-16-year olds are at a crucial stage on the pathway from childhood dependence towards adult independence. The Transition Year Programme (TYP) allows young people to become more aware of themselves and of the world around them. Decision-making can be more informed and ambitions more focused.

2 The emphasis is on developing skills rather than on simply remembering facts. Such skills - academic, technical and general - stand to your daughter for life.

3 Your daughter can gain realistic insights into adult and working life. A 'work experience' placement, where employers co-operate with the school in allowing pupils to sample a workplace environment at first hand, has been a major milestone on many young people's path to maturity.

4 Pupils can develop more independent study habits. The emphasis is on on-going assessment rather than on a terminal exam. Project work, for example, where a pupil has to plan and execute a piece of work over a number of days or weeks, can promote self-regulated learning. Rather than have students lose any study habits, TY can lay a solid base for learning in a more adult, responsible way.

5 The year lays a solid foundation for the Leaving Certificate programme. At the end of a TYP your daughter can be better equipped, better motivated and more clearly focused than her counterparts who did not have the benefit of the year. This foundation can also be a solid base for a more mature and consistent approach to third-level studies after the Leaving Certificate.

6 Transition Year is not dominated by an exam at the end of the course. Therefore, there is space and opportunity for our school to concentrate on aspects of learning which don't always feature on either the Junior or Leaving Certificate courses. Qualities which might not otherwise flourish are often developed. Individuality is respected and fostered.

7 TY offers your daughter a broader variety of topics and subjects.

8 TY gets pupils and teachers out of the classroom, into other learning environments. Trips to galleries, workplaces, museums, theatres and other stimulating locations are an integral and beneficial element of our Programme.

9 Transition Year places a heavy emphasis on learning from experience. This recognition of the validity of young people's own lived experience means that they are continually challenged to make sense of their own experiences. Studying aspects of popular culture such as fashion, advertising, popular music, cinema, etc. can increase the motivation for learning and add to the growth of self-esteem.

10 Pupils who have missed out on parts of the Junior Certificate course should use Transition Year to catch up or fill in gaps in their learning before starting a Leaving Certificate programme.

11 Your daughter can learn the skills of dealing with people in practical ways. There can be a lot of contact with adults outside the school. Oral communication skills, so relevant to all aspects of living and working, are highlighted. Many teachers identify the growth of pupil's confidence and self-esteem through the Transition Year Programmes as the key benefit of the year.

12 Attention to careers, third-level courses, the realities of employment and unemployment are central concerns in Transition Year. By the end of a Transition Year programme pupils have often changed their career hopes and plans quite radically from the ones they may have had twelve months earlier.

13 Pupils can follow and develop special interests. These might be sporting, leisure, academic or social interests. The flexibility offered by Transition Year means it can be an ideal opportunity for your daughter to respond to challenges such as Gaisce (The President's Award Scheme) or other personal interests.

14 Transition Year links schools more directly with their immediate communities. Pupils can become involved in activities such as voluntary work, community service or local fund-raising initiatives. The community resources of individual parents and others are an important part of our TY Programme and are welcomed by us.

15 Transition Year can encourage more mature relationships between you and your daughter. Many parents remark that they have been changed through their daughters' experiences of a TY programme. At the end of a day's work experience or a particularly stimulating field trip, parents are often the ones best positioned to listen.

Frequently, the biggest lessons learned by the pupil are about herself. Again, with project work or other learning strategies used in TYP, parents can feel more centrally involved in the growing-up and learning process. Thus, Transition Year also provides special opportunities for you!

Pupils are required to be in school and have their presence recorded, no later than 8.40 am each day.

Full participation in the Transition Year programme is expected by all and is of no benefit to those who choose to exclude themselves.

Beyond Transition Year.

‘Students who do transition year secure much better grades in the Leaving Cert exam than those who do not, according to an unpublished ESRI report.

The report, which took two years to research, is the most comprehensive examination of transition year since its introduction in its current format.

The central recommendation of the report, by Dr Emer Smyth of the ESRI, is that transition year should be made available in every school in the State.’

(Irish Times)

‘There is growing evidence that students who have taken the Transition Year Programme are more self-reliant learners when they enter third-level education than their peers’

(Commission on the Points System, Final Report & Recommendations,p46)

- **TY Students do better by an average of 26 points**
- **Repeat students only gain by an average 5 points**
- **TY Candidates more likely to be ‘Educationally Adventurous’**

(NCCA LONGITUDINAL STUDY)

Forms and information can be found at:

www.muckrosstransitionyear.com

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