

Transition Year Programme

2019/20



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Rationale

Why we value TY

Transition Year is an integral and compulsory part of the Glenstal educational experience. Transition Year in a boarding school offers unique opportunities for participation in a wide range of interesting, formative and entertaining activities. The school believes strongly in the merits and benefits of this experience. It is not a year where every last detail of what will be studied or experienced will be prescribed in advance. It is a year where boys, staff and parents work together to allow varied and new experiences of learning to take place, and where valuable skills for life are discovered. Some boys join the school in Transition Year and go on to complete the Leaving Certificate with us.

Freed from the constraints of exam curriculum, Transition Year allows the school to work more fully according to its Benedictine ethos. Though the Rule of St Benedict was written for monks, many of its key values, such as discretion, gentleness and self-control permeate the design of our Transition Year programme, providing opportunities for a holistic approach to education. Flexibility is incorporated in our programme so that our students may grow and develop the full richness of their unique potential.

Already, it looks like a busy year ahead with the calendar full of exciting opportunities and events!

Overall Goals

Our programme is based on the aims of the Transition Year Programme prescribed by the Department of Education and Science:

- (1) Education for maturity with the emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
- (2) The promotion of general, technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
- (3) Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

We aim to have this philosophy permeating throughout the entire school but each activity in TY is planned with reference to these 3 goals.

“A very well-organised, high quality, compulsory TY programme provides a positive and appropriate transition for students into senior cycle. This programme provides a core curriculum, a subject-sampling layer of subjects, a number of high-profile TY appropriate activities, and a good quality work-experience programme.”

*Whole-School Evaluation Management, Leadership and Learning DES
REPORT, March 2014*

TY Academic Structure

The Layered Approach

1) Core Subjects Layer: All students will continue to study the core subjects of English, Irish, Maths, French/German, PE.

While teachers may use different teaching approaches throughout the year, the main focus will be on preparing the student for the Leaving Certificate. We will have testing and reporting of these subjects throughout the year.

2) Subject Sampling Layer: Students are given the opportunity to sample all of the subjects on offer in the school for Leaving Certificate. These include Music, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Economics, Business, Accounting, History, Classics, Geography and Art. Students can then make informed choices about their choice of subjects for 5th year. The Guidance Counsellors and teachers are on hand to offer advice and guidance throughout this process.

TY is part of the Senior Cycle experience and lays a solid foundation for Leaving Certificate studies. TY programmes should challenge students intellectually, give them an orientation to the world of work and cater for the development of their personal and social awareness.

Research has shown that students who take TY achieve, on average, higher points in the Leaving Certificate exam; this is perhaps due to the development of their general study skills as well as the skills required for each individual subject.

3) Some of our Transition Year Specific Modules for 2019/20: We provide Transition Year specific modules within the day and the evening schedules. Among the possible activities are:

Gaisce: The President's Award is a self-development programme that encourages students to find their passion, get active and make a difference in their community. Gaisce is a direct challenge from the President of Ireland to young people aged 15-25 to dream big and realise their potential. By taking part in Gaisce, students will take on exciting personal, physical and community challenges and develop new skills.



TY Talks: This year the students have been presenting a live streamed 'TED-style' talk. They choose a topic they are interested in, research it, write their speech, edit the text, practice their presentation and then present live on our school website. The boys are saying this is one of the highlights of the year so far!

Young Social Innovators: We want to give everybody an opportunity to use their creativity to respond to social issues and contribute to building a fairer, more caring and equal society. This programme asks students to examine the world through a new lens and to reimagine the type of society they would like to live in, one that is more caring, equal and fair. It is about taking ideas and putting them into action and working together as a team.

Connemara Maths: Workshops include Music Technology, Sound Production, Song Recording, Movie Making, Song Writing, STEM Challenges, Coding, Robotics, Raft Building, Water Rockets, Virtual Reality, 360 Degree Digital Film, Drone Design & related Maths interactive discovery led workshops.



Interview and Presentation Skills: A one day workshop teaching students about the key skills involved in interviews and presentations. This session is usually run before the students go out on Work Experience. Some individual self appraisal and targeted learning opportunities are included so students have individual learning points to take away from the session.

Press Pass is designed specifically to enable students and teachers alike to learn all about newspapers and the writing, analysis, preparation and photography that's involved in putting one together. Students become familiar with the five language types which form the basis of study for Leaving Certificate English paper one in a very practical way; the languages of Information, Argument, Narration, Persuasion as well as the Aesthetic Use of Language.

TY Times: Two years ago, a group of our students came together with members of the TY team to discuss ways to inform students, parents and the wider school community of the activities taking place in TY. The concept of a regular newsletter emerged. The students took ownership of the newsletter by writing reviews, editing and publishing their work to the school community. It was a great success and students gained a lot of confidence in their communication, writing and editing skills. In September, we will be inviting the TY class of 2020 to be part of this important team.

4) Once-off Activities: Due to the nature of our school being a boarding school, we arrange our once-off activities and trips for Tuesdays and some evenings. Here are some of our planned activities for 2019/20.

Legal Studies Programme: A one-day programme where Transition Year students learn about the Irish legal system including the functions of the various court personnel, how the law is made, the functions of different courts, aspects of civil and criminal law and the structure of how a trial is run. Topical cases are also discussed.



Road Safety Workshop and Theory Test Preparation: The programme provides important educational material and learning on road safety for pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and motorists. It covers such issues as seat belts and airbags, driver fatigue, drink/drug driving, road-safety engineering and enforcement, basic first aid at road crashes, emergency services and rehabilitation, licensing and insurance issues, the NCT, purchasing a car and driving abroad.

History Workshops with Br Colmán: Br. Colmán Ó Clabaigh, OSB is a monk of Glenstal Abbey and has been the Burns Visiting Scholar at Boston College, MA. He is an author and historian with a keen interest in Medieval Ireland and shares his wealth of knowledge with our students. His talks include 'The Barringtons of Glenstal' and 'Tribesmen, Merchants and Mariners, Medieval Galway in context'.

Irish School of Etiquette: Etiquette applies to all of us, all of the time. The benefits of etiquette include creating a good impression, and putting others at ease. Through the use of good manners, confidence builds, resulting in one being a credit to one's parents, guardians, schools, work etc. In this module, all students will learn social, dining and communication skills, which will enable them to feel comfortable and confident in any situation.



InspIreland Poetry Workshops with Stephen Murray: InspIreland Poetry Slam Workshops help young people build confidence in their literary skills, as well as public speaking and more advanced rhetorical techniques. The boys thoroughly enjoy this workshop and write some very personal poetry pieces.



SOAR Workshop: Soar believes that all young people have the potential for greatness. The T.Y. workshop is an environment where young people get to examine the social influences that shape how they behave, understand which ones serve them and which ones hold them back, and then choose which to incorporate into their lives. This is a space where young people get to exercise the muscles of emotional awareness by having honest conversations about what's going on for them, practicing how to acknowledge greatness in one another and take ownership over their lives.

Activity Based Outings: such as surfing, mountain biking and Mondello driving experience are included as incentives for students to connect with each other on a more relaxed basis and to be rewarded for their efforts in school and for good behaviour. (Rewards don't always have to be pizza!)

Guest Speakers: Although we have always welcomed guest speakers over the years, we make it a scheduled activity for the last term with old boys, parents and friends of the school and the monastery coming to speak to the students about their school days, their careers, their lives and the secrets to their successes.

We have already scheduled some guest speakers for the coming academic year but we hope to build on this initiative by welcoming current parents who would be willing to participate. *Please let us know if you would be interested in coming to speak to the students in the coming academic year.*

Activities from TY 2018-2019

2019/20 will be similar

September: Camino Trip, Public Access to Law, Sports workshops with Daughters of Charity, Ballyhoura Biking.

October: Irish Film Institute workshop, Trip to Microsoft in Dublin, Workshops with Murroe Primary School, Highrock Drama workshop, UL open day, Connemara Maths.

November: Stockbroking and EBusiness workshop, First Aid Certification, Driving Experience at Mondello, Theatre Trip to 'Asking for It' in the Abbey Theatre.

December: Irish School of Etiquette workshop, Onsite tour of 'The Barringtons of Glenstal' with Br Colman, Music Generation Workshop.

January: Work Experience

February: Preparation to Drive workshop, Abbey Theatre post-play visit to school, SOAR workshop, Inspire Ireland with Stephen Murray.

March: Connemara Maths, Self-Defence Training, Gaisce Adventure Journey, Surfing.

This is just a sample of the activities we have done this year. Classes run as normal on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Subject Choice for Senior Cycle

The boys will get the opportunity to sample all of the senior cycle subjects on offer during their TY. Even if your son has an idea of which subjects he would like to do in 5th year, we would strongly advise that he keeps an open mind and engages fully with the process of subject sampling. In that way, he will be making an informed decision based on his experiences. The process culminates with a ‘Subject Choice Seminar’, where each senior cycle teacher gives a presentation on their subject indicating homework expectations, exam structure, career opportunities, etc. 5th year students also meet the TY students to answer any questions they may have regarding subjects. Student input is at the core of this process. Each student will meet individually with the Guidance Counsellors as they make their final decisions on subjects.

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International Travel & Foreign Exchange Trips

We recognise the educational benefits of foreign travel and encourage all of our students to engage in the programmes on offer.

Camino Trip: In September 2018, we held our first TY trip to Spain to walk the Camino over 5 days. The boys were lucky enough to receive their Junior Cert results on the ‘boreens’ of the Spanish countryside! It took the building of relationships and developing leadership skills to a new level this year. The boys returned to school enthusiastic and ready for work. This trip is compulsory for all students and many boys have said it was a personal highlight this year. The picture below shows the boys after they received their certificates at the end of the Camino walk.



European Exchanges

Students who study a Modern European Language will engage in an exchange programme by travelling to France/Germany/Spain in the final term during April and May. In return, their exchange partner will come to experience life here in Ireland for a number of weeks during the year. It is imperative that families make contact with their exchange families before students travel to build relationships and ensure both students benefit fully from the experience.



Contact details

French Exchange: David Cantwell & Jane O'Regan of TY Europe
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German Exchange: Daniela Leahy dleahy@glenstal.com

Spanish Exchange: Jane O'Regan of TY Europe oreganjane@eircom.net

Delbarton, USA & Australia School Visits

Students have the opportunity to experience the long standing relationships with schools abroad. Each year, students visit Delbarton school in New Jersey, USA and in Australia, Central Coast Grammar School in Terrigal, north of Sydney and St Augustine's College in central Sydney.

There are three places for Glenstal students in Delbarton and four places in Australia.

Glenstal boys may apply as follows:

An essay must be completed and submitted to headmaster@glenstal.com by May 2, the title of which is

“How I will be an Ambassador for Glenstal Abbey School”.

Students cannot apply for both and behaviour records will be a consideration in the application process, which will include an interview. These trips are for four weeks maximum and work experience for those who go on either Delbarton or Australian exchange must be completed during mid term or Easter holidays.