

ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



INFORMATION BOOKLET
FOR
PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Transition Year
2008 – 2009

YEAR HEAD

Mrs. D Kelleher

COORDINATOR

Dr. D. Wilson

CONTRACT OF LEARNING

Transition Year will help you to make the transfer from Junior Cycle to Leaving Certificate. It offers you a unique opportunity to develop in a number of important areas.

Personal: To help you develop your personality and character towards a more positive and confident self-image.

Study/Work: To develop independent work and study habits appropriate to the Senior Cycle.

Career: To become familiar with workplaces outside school and possible career paths.

Social: To become more informed about society and more skilled at dealing with people.

In St. Michael's College we have high expectations of our Transition Year students with regard to work and behaviour.

In Transition Year you are expected to contract to do the following:

- To participate actively in the opportunities offered throughout Transition Year.
- To develop work and study habits appropriate to the Senior Cycle.
- To participate in class-work and complete homework and other assignments on time and to the required standard.
- To establish positive and respectful relationships with fellow students and teachers.
- To observe the rules and regulations of St. Michael's College with regard to conduct, attendance, punctuality and uniform.

Signing this contract is a mark of your commitment to the success of YOUR Transition Year. From the staff's point of view it represents our commitment to treat Transition Year students as young adults participating in a course which we have planned with the goals of developing greater maturity, relevant skills and an orientation to the working world.

In your first Portfolio presentation please include your completed Contract of Learning.

ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



CONTRACT

I, _____

have read and understand the Contract of Learning.

I accept the conditions set out for Transition Year as reasonable and appropriate to Senior Cycle students. I will work and behave according to the requirements of this contract.

Signed:

Student

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

Mrs. D. Kelleher
Year Head

Dr. D. Wilson
Coordinator

TRANSITION YEAR CURRICULUM

ACADEMIC AREAS

Academic subjects continue to be studied during Transition Year.

They remain key elements of the Transition Year Programme and positive participation in

1. Class work
2. Study and homework

is expected from all students.

Uniform Policy

1. Students must arrive at school on time and in full school uniform. They are not permitted to change into their uniform upon their arrival in school. They will be excluded from class and from Thursday afternoon courses if they are not wearing their full school uniform.
2. Students participating in the Judo and Sport Science modules are required to bring tracksuits and sports shoes. They will change out of their uniform for these modules only.
Failure to bring the required clothing may result in disqualification from the course.
3. Students are not permitted to wear ear rings or to have other piercings in school.
4. Hair should be neat and no longer than nor no shorter than to the nape of the neck. Dyed/coloured or bleached hair will not be tolerated.

Students who breach any of the rules above will be sent to the Vice-Principal and will be suspended home.

Advice to Parents

As in the other years in St. Michael's, late coming and absences are monitored daily. If a student is absent for any reason he must give a letter explaining his absence to his tutor on his first day of return to school. Sanctions will be imposed for persistent lateness and parents will be informed.

OTHER CORE TRANSITION YEAR AREAS

Thursday afternoon curriculum

There are 4 modular courses organised throughout the year. Students have the option of taking "The Steer Clear Course" on Thursday afternoons. They are withdrawn from the other modular courses for ten weeks to complete this course.

Full attendance at and full participation in each course is essential. Students cannot be excused from any session of these courses.

These courses rotate among the 4 form classes.

Module 1. (September 4th – October 16th. (7 week course).

- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| ❖ Judo | 4.3 |
| ❖ Sport Science | 4.2 |
| ❖ Golf | 4.1 |
| ❖ Law | 4.4 |

Module 2. (October 23rd – December 18th).

❖ Golf	4.2
❖ Sport Science	4.1
❖ Judo	4.4
❖ Law	4.3

Module 3. (January 18th – February 26th).

❖ Judo	4.1
❖ Sport Science	4.4
❖ Golf	4.3
❖ Law	4.2

Module 4. (March 5th – May 21st).

❖ Judo	4.2
❖ Sport Science	4.3
❖ Golf	4.4
❖ Law	4.1

Thursday Afternoon Curriculum

Thursday afternoons in Transition Year differ from any other year in the school in that they are devoted to specific modules. Each module presents a new challenge to the students as the course content ranges from sporting/musical to the academic.

All students in Transition Year will participate in the following courses. The courses are offered on a modular basis. Each course is of 7 weeks duration, culminating in an assessment in the final session. It is vital that students do not miss a session of these courses as they may be excluded from the assessment session and would therefore not be awarded a certificate. You will find a brief outline of each course below.

Judo

This course is administered by Judo Ireland. The course teacher is Mr. Alan Martin. The basic skills of Judo are taught and practiced for 6 weeks. Mr. Martin conducts a grading exam in the final week. Successful candidates are awarded a white belt. Each student is enrolled as a member of Judo Ireland and on completion of the white belt exam is welcome to continue on to brown belt level. This course has been very successful in previous years to the extent that two of last year's sixth years continued on under the guidance of Alan Martin and represented the College in all Ireland Judo Championships. Both were medal winners.

Law

The Law course is conducted by Mr. Liam Hogan and Mr. Colm McCarvill, both Barristers at law. This course gives students an excellent introduction to the Legal System. The content focuses in Criminal Law, Evidence and Constitutional Law. The course develops a familiarity in the students of the workings of the court system. Students are taught correct criminal procedures (rights of suspect in custody).

An integral part of the module is a Mock Trial where students will practice public speaking and negotiation skills.

As a component of the 7 week module, each student will visit the Four Courts and Kings Inns accompanied by our Barristers.

Golf

Golf is offered as a seven week module. The venue is “Leopardstown Golf Club”. The students are given a two hour slot once a week in which to improve on their skills or to learn the basics of the game from scratch. They are divided into groups according to their ability and each group works under the auspices of a professional. Students should use their own set of clubs if they have them. In exceptional circumstances the club will provide spares.

Sport Science

The Sport Science will cover the following modules:

1. Exercise and the body systems.
Motivation and goal setting.
2. Factors affecting fitness.
Aerobic fitness and testing.
3. Anaerobic fitness and testing.
Fitness tests.
4. Methods of energy training.
Types of muscle training.
5. Methods of muscle training.
Circuit training.
6. Flexibility.
Avoidance of injury.
7. Planning a training programme.

All students will submit a project on week 7 of the course.

Portfolio

The Portfolio is an essential part of the Transition Year Programme. It is essentially a diary of the year. It should be a personal response to everything in which you are involved in the course of the year.

You should begin to compile your Portfolio on your first day back in school. Write up your material on a regular basis and don't leave it all until the last minute! Work should be presented **in a neat folder and typed if possible. Each student should save his portfolio on a personal disk. It can then be printed out on any of the school's computers.**

Portfolios will be checked twice during the year.

1. **Week beginning Monday, December 8th.**
2. **Week beginning Monday, April 27th.**

A prize is awarded for the best Portfolio in each form at the end of the year.

You need to include the following in your **first Portfolio presentation**:

1. **Contract of learning. (contained in this booklet).**
2. **Your aims and expectations for the year.**
3. **At least 2 examples of good work that you have completed.**
4. **Report on your Thursday afternoon module.**
5. **Report on all the courses in which you have participated.**
6. **Reports on any guest speakers who have addressed you.**
7. **Full write up of the Monday module (double period).**
8. **Full write up of the Friday module (double period).**

9. An account of your Dunmore House/Royal Hospital/Life Centre placement.
10. Photographs, leaflets and any other information that you have collected from any of the above.

Assessments in Transition Year

There will be two weeks of assessment/exams.

1. Monday November 17th – November 21st.
2. Friday May 1st – May 8th.

If students wish to avail of the opportunity to participate in language courses abroad they may do so in the month of June only. No student should be absent from school except during the designated work experience weeks. If a student is absent because of illness, a note is required on his first day of return to school.

Transition Year exams influence streaming into fifth year.

Reports

Reports will be sent home on:

- **October 24th (Progress report)**
- **December (Assessment report)**
- **June (Assessment report)**

Work Experience

Three weeks are assigned to Work Experience in the course of Transition Year. Each student is required to organise at least two unpaid work experience placements. **There is a placement of one week in term 1 for 4.3 and 4.4.**

There is a placement in term 3 for 4.1 and 4.2.

ALL STUDENTS WILL DO Work Experience for one week in the second term.

Work Experience/Killary

- 1. November 24th to November 28th - 4.3 and 4.4 only.**
- 2. March 9th to March 13th - All students**
- 3. May 11th to May 15th - 4.1 and 4.2 only.**

As all students are involved in Work Experience in March they **should now start contacting places where they would like to work.** As previously mentioned, **we do not accept Saturday jobs as valid Work Experience.**

We do not facilitate students doing work experience outside of these weeks. We make exceptions only if a student is accepted onto the Introduction to Life Programme as we realise that the hospital selects the week. Please address any queries with regard to work experience to your tutor.

Work Experience Feedback

You will be required to keep an account of your Work Experience placement. This must be included in your Portfolio.

Your account should refer to your personal experience. You should include your views and observations.

Below are some points that might be of assistance to you in compiling your account.

- What were your feelings on the first day?
- What skills were required on a particular day?
- What did you find most interesting about your work experience?
- What did you find most difficult about it?
- What was most enjoyable about the placement?
- What area of responsibility were you given?
- In what ways were you of benefit to your employer?
- In what ways did your experience differ from school?
- What surprised you about your work experience?
- Was there a change in your attitude at the end of the week?
- In what ways did you benefit from the work experience?
- Was your work experience helpful regarding your career plans?
- What advice would you give to next years 4th Year students regarding work experience?

You may of course make other observations about your work experience that you deem to be relevant.

Community Service/Outreach Programme

Dunmore House

All students have the option of applying for a **two-week community service work placement** in Dunmore House. They work on a voluntary basis in Dunmore House, a facility run by St. John of God's Carmona Services. Dunmore House is situated at 111 Upper Glenageary Road, Dun Laoghaire.

During this two-week period they are not required to attend school. The students are rostered to work in Dunmore House in groups of four. If your son is interested in this opportunity, he must write a letter of application to **Mr. John McManus**. This letter should be posted in the box marked Dunmore House **in Mrs. D. Kelleher's office**. The closing date for applications is **Friday, June 13th**. If your son is selected for the Social Innovation programme he will do his community service in The Life Centre and is not eligible for Dunmore House.

In the letter your son should include:

- **His interests, sporting and non-sporting.**
- **Why he would like to be considered for a placement.**
- **How he thinks he could assist the work of Dunmore House.**
- **What he hopes personally to gain from the placement.**

Royal Hospital Donnybrook

Students have the option of applying for a one week placement in the Royal Hospital. During this one week period they are not required to attend school. The placement involves working as a general nurse's aid and assisting the carers in their duties

If your son is interested in a placement, he must apply in writing to Mrs. D. Kelleher. The closing date for applications is **Friday, June 13th**.

The Life Centre

All students who participate in The Social Innovation Module are required to do a one week placement in The Life Centre as part of the module. Students are rostered on a weekly basis throughout the year.

Additional Opportunities

Irish Hospice Foundation Coffee Morning

As part of the students' Social Awareness Programme, the Transition Year Students host an annual coffee morning in aid of the Irish Hospice Foundation. This will take place on Thursday, September 18th from 9:45am until 12:30pm. All parents are cordially invited to attend. It always proves to be a great success, raising a large sum of money for this worthy cause.

KILLARY ADVENTURE CENTRE

Two weeks in the course of Transition Year are assigned to trips to Killary Adventure Centre, Co. Galway. Each student will have the opportunity of going on one of these.

KILLARY 1	November 24th – 28th	(4.1 and 4.2)
KILLARY 2	May 11th – 15th	(4.3 and 4.4)

A wide range of outdoor activities can be enjoyed in this centre including canoeing, windsurfing, mountaineering and rock climbing. Students are well supervised with a ratio of 1 adult to 10 students and they are fully insured.

The aim of this week is to combine enjoyable outdoor activities with experiential learning focussed on working with others in a goal-oriented way.

THE FASHION SHOW

The Fashion Show will take place in the O'Reilly Hall in the "Royal Dublin Society" on Saturday March 7th 2009. Our students work with the girls from Muckross Park, and are responsible for the marketing and organisation of the Fashion Show. It has proved to be a very popular event. Details will follow in late October. Interviews for the various jobs will be conducted in December.

SPORTS

School sports take place on all afternoons and Transition Year provides students with the opportunity to involve themselves in a wide range of activities including rugby, basketball, archery, tennis, water-polo and athletics. Details of all extra curricular activities are available from Mr. S. Carey and are also published on the school website.

All students have the opportunity in participating in the “Gaisce Award”. We strongly advise that every student participates. Below is a short account of what this award involves. Queries should be addressed to Dr. C. Hannon.

Gaisce Award / President’s Award

This medal is awarded externally by the President’s award scheme. Each candidate is required to complete the relevant number of hours in the following four categories:

- ❖ Personal Skills

- ❖ Physical recreation.

- ❖ The spirit of adventure.

- ❖ Community involvement.

These areas are organised by the students on their own initiative and in their own time.

Dr. C. Hannon co-ordinates the scheme in St. Michael’s. He has been in charge of the scheme for many years and is on hand to offer advice and to make suggestions. Dr. Hannon meets with the students in their form class on a weekly basis. He records progress made and advises each student as to how to move on to the next component.

We strongly advise that you encourage your son to take part and monitor his progress at home. Parental involvement is vital in this regard.

“Skills Week”

“Skills Week” will run from Monday, March 30th until Friday, April 3rd.

During “Skills Week” there will be no class for students. The students are asked to sign up to one of 5 activities. Each activity involves the learning of a new skill. This is not a free week off school. Students will be asked to select the course they wish to take by the end of January '09.

Life Saving. The Bronze Medallion Award

This is a very intense course and applicants need to be good swimmers. The course covers both land and water work. Students learn the skills of life saving under the guidance of our facilitator Mr. Paul Collins. The administering body is “The Royal Life Saving Society UK.” The last session will include the practical exam, conducted in the college by external examiners. Successful applicants are awarded The Bronze Medallion, the first level exam in life saving. They can continue on the Silver and Gold Medallion level in their own time in consultation with Mr. Collins if they so wish. He will advise them every step of the way. The course may involve Wednesday afternoon and may overrun the 3.35pm normal end of school time. The course will be limited to 14 students and only seriously dedicated students will be accepted. If interested, students should address themselves to Mr. Barry Kelleher who will advise as to the suitability of the course for them.

Gaeity School of Acting

Drama is widely accepted as a powerful tool in addressing difficult issues in a safe environment.

The Gaeity School of Acting has developed a series of drama workshops which tackle social issues such as racism, anger management, bullying and substance abuse. The facilitators and the students will pick a theme and use a Shakespeare or Irish contemporary text to explore how these social issues affect our lives today. In the Addictions workshop the students will explore their own current definitions and understanding of addiction. The facilitator will then challenge the students' perceptions through structured role-plays, which along with feedback sessions are tailored to create an accurate awareness of addiction. Throughout the week the students will work on all aspects of performance and character analysis. On the last day the students will perform a small showcase. Each workshop will:

- Explore the topic from the students' perspective.
- Challenge and support the students regarding their perceptions, in the hope of creating awareness and empathy.
- Focus on the student's personal power to challenge/change the situations they are unhappy with.

Basic Course in First Aid

This course is aimed at students who have not previously completed a course in First Aid. The course is administered by “The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps”. During the course of the week the students will receive basic training in all aspects of First Aid, including correct diagnosis of injuries, correct bandaging and setting of fractures. They will be trained in how to respond quickly and effectively to an emergency. The course is very practical and totally “hands on”. The final session of the course is the practical exam conducted by the facilitators in the college. Successful candidates are awarded a certificate in First Aid.

The course would benefit greatly any student who intends applying for jobs with youth groups / summer projects or a student who would like to be involved in coaching a junior team at a later stage. The certificate enhances curriculum vitae enormously.

Level 1 Sailing Course

The sailing course is run by “The Irish National Sailing School”. The school is situated in Dun Laoghaire on the West Pier. The school has been running sailing programmes for juniors for over 20 years. St. Michael’s College has participated in the level 1 course for the past 10 years and our students have benefited from and enjoyed the sailing course enormously. The course promotes many skills, namely:

- Personal development.
- Physical confidence.
- Communication and awareness of the environment.

Like many other sports sailing is an intensive experience using all aspects of physicality and intuition. Health, safety, co-ordination, consideration, responsibility and social skills are part of every session on the water. A certificate is awarded to successful candidates upon completion of all of the aspects of the course.

Music Composition and Performance

This course is aimed at aspiring musicians.

All participants on the course **should be in possession of and be able to play an instrument.** The course is run by Mr. Robert Cunningham, a multi-talented musician who has vast experience in the field of composition and performance.

During the course the students will be invited to compose their own music under the eye of our facilitator. He will advise as to what works well and what does not and will group the musicians together according to their ability and compatibility.

Mr. Cunningham has close links with “Sonic Eye Media” and will follow on from the course in Music Technology by helping to develop the student’s skills in all aspects of sound editing and performance.

Diary Dates for Transition Year

August

Thursday 28th Return to school. Finish at 1.00pm.

September

Thursday 4th Thursday afternoon activities commence.
Come prepared.

Wednesday 10th Junior Cert results distributed.

Thursday 18th Hospice morning until 12.30pm. Afternoon activities as normal.

October

Friday 24th Progress report sent home.

Monday 27th – Friday 31st Mid-term break.

November

Monday 17th – Friday 21st Assessment Week.

Monday 24th – Friday 28th Killary / Work Experience.

December

Monday 8th Portfolio 1 Presentation.

Mon 22nd – Tue 6th Jan Christmas Holidays.

January '09

Tuesday 6th School reopens.

February

Monday 16th – Friday 20th Mid-term break.

March

Saturday 7th Fashion Show R.D.S.

Monday 9th – Friday 13th Work experience for all.

Monday 30th – Fri Apr 3rd Skills Week.

April

Monday 6th – Friday 17th Easter Holidays.

Monday 27th Portfolio 2 Presentation.

May

Monday 4th – Friday 8th Assessment Week 2.

Monday 11th – Friday 15th Killary / Work Experience.

Tuesday 26th Awards Night T.B.C.

Friday 29th Summer Holidays Commence.