

St. Mary's College Dundalk



Transition Year Statement.

St Mary's College Profile

St. Mary's College is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School for boys and girls, operating under the Trusteeship of the Marist Fathers. As such, it supports the religious and educational philosophy of its founder, Fr. Jean-Claude Colin.

Mission Statement

St Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers.

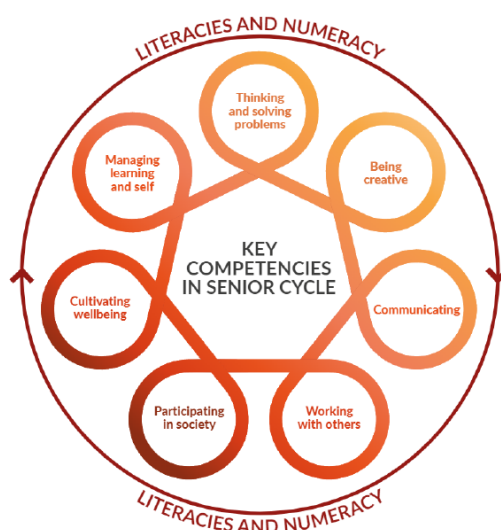
The primary aim of the College through its spiritual and humanistic endeavours, is to promote and develop a sense of community where those entrusted to its care can be brought to the fullness of their human potential in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel.

The College, through its academic, pastoral and spiritual undertakings strives to provide for the holistic development and welfare of each of the students in its care.

St Mary's College offers the Transition Year Programme as a programme for all Third-Year students.

The Board of Management, College resources, specific requirements of practical subjects and room availability sets the limit on the number of places available in Transition Year annually.

Please note - A **Programmes Information Meeting** is held annually for all Parents and Guardians, explaining the senior options available to the students at St Mary's College. This information evening usually occurs in the first half of Term two. It is during this information meeting that the Transition Year Programme and the application process is explained in detail.



Marist Ethos and Transition Year Statement.

The Marist Ethos holds a sincere significance in shaping the values and educational approach of St Mary's College, and particularly in the Transition Year Programme.

This unique year, which bridges the gap between Junior and Senior cycles, offers students an opportunity to grow, reflect, and develop not only academically but also socially, emotionally, and spiritually. The importance of integrating our Marist ethos within this Transition Year Statement is crucial in guiding students through this formative period in their education.

Embedded in the Marist tradition, our ethos emphasises values such as promoting excellence, fostering our best spiritual, intellectual and physical self and being identifiably Catholic (as below). These values are essential in fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students feel empowered to explore their interests, build meaningful relationships, and become responsible members of the wider community.

Through the Marist lens, Transition Year is singularly about academic development, but also about nurturing well-rounded individuals who are compassionate, socially conscious, and grounded in their faith.

Within this Transition Year Statement, the guiding Marist Ethos ensures that the programme goes beyond curriculum and assessment and provides students with opportunities for personal growth and reflection. It encourages each student to act with integrity, serve others with kindness, and live out the values of the Marist tradition, and indeed Catholic Social Traditions, in their everyday lives.

This approach not only enhances each student's academic experience but also shapes their character, helping them to transition into young people who are capable of making a positive impact in their communities and in the world.



1. The Purpose of this Transition Year Statement.

The St Mary's College TY Programme Statement is designed around the key competencies of senior cycle, to incorporate the development and learning of students moving from junior cycle into senior cycle, and as they prepare for their future lives as local, national and global citizens.

Young people in Ireland are living in a changing world characterised by globalisation and urbanisation, diversifying communities, expanding digital and technological developments, changes in the world of work and career patterns, and an urgency for global sustainable living.

Transition Year is a one-year optional programme available to all post-primary schools and it offers a unique opportunity where schools and communities can collaborate to encourage young people to thrive now and into the future.

Transition Year offers time, space and autonomy to create enjoyable and meaningful educational experiences that support students in senior cycle. It can be a bridge to opening up a broader range of possibilities and pathways. The Transition Year Programme enables young people to develop a greater capacity to respond to uncertainty, manage complexity, nurture personal interests and become agents of positive, ethical change in society.

St Mary's College focuses on delivering a programme aligned to the Transition Year Programme Statement, one that is inclusive and embraces diversity, facilitates a sense of discovery, reports more broadly on student learning and development, and values the contribution each student. It is during Transition Year students can develop more mature relationships with teachers and other adults, becoming more active agents in designing their own educational experiences.

Participation in Transition Year contributes to the continuing learning and development and personal growth of students. All students are supported throughout St Mary's College Transition Year Programme to become more adaptable, empathetic, competent and resilient human beings.

It is through this creatively college-designed Transition Year curriculum, all of our students may avail of opportunities to grow and develop, learning to make more informed choices in senior cycle and beyond.

This programme is guided by the new TY statement, "Empowering Growth Through Exploration". This vision encapsulates the spirit of TY as a year to:

Empower: Foster independence, responsibility, and self-confidence in students, equipping them to become proactive and engaged members of society.

Growth: Prioritize holistic development, emphasizing emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and resilience.

Exploration: Encourage curiosity and creativity through diverse experiences, ranging from work placements and community service to innovative academic modules and extracurricular activities.

Under this statement, TY aims to create a dynamic learning environment where students can take ownership of their educational journey, embrace challenges, and discover their passions.

TY is designed to prepare students to become more independent, self-directed learners. It enables students to develop a range of transferable critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills, empowering them to meet the challenges of the Leaving Certificate programmes and the world of work. (Education Research Centre 2013).

2. Definition of Transition Year.

Transition Year is a one-year optional programme available to all post-primary schools.

As a standalone programme within the senior cycle experience, the Transition Year programme offers a unique opportunity where schools and communities can collaborate to encourage young people to thrive now and into the future.

Transition Year offers time, space and autonomy to create enjoyable and meaningful educational experiences that support students in senior cycle. It can be a bridge to opening up a broader range of possibilities and pathways.

The programme enables young people to develop a greater capacity to respond to uncertainty, manage complexity, nurture personal interests and become agents of positive, ethical change in society.

3. Aims of Transition Year Programme.

The Transition Year Programme will:

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 the student can be developed in the classroom and school, in the home and in their role as local, 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 support the learning and development of the student through a reflection and renewal process involving students, teachers, school leaders, parents and community partners.

4. Coordination of the Transition Year Programme and the Core Transition Year Team.

TY Co-ordinator: Coordination of TY and the role of the TY Coordinator in particular, are central to how the TY Programme Statement can facilitate effective TY programmes.

Core Transition Year Team: The coordination of TY works through a TY Core Team, led by the TY Coordinator, developing a culture of teacher innovations, talents and expertise.

The TY Core Team collaborates to improve the experiences for students across the TY programme.

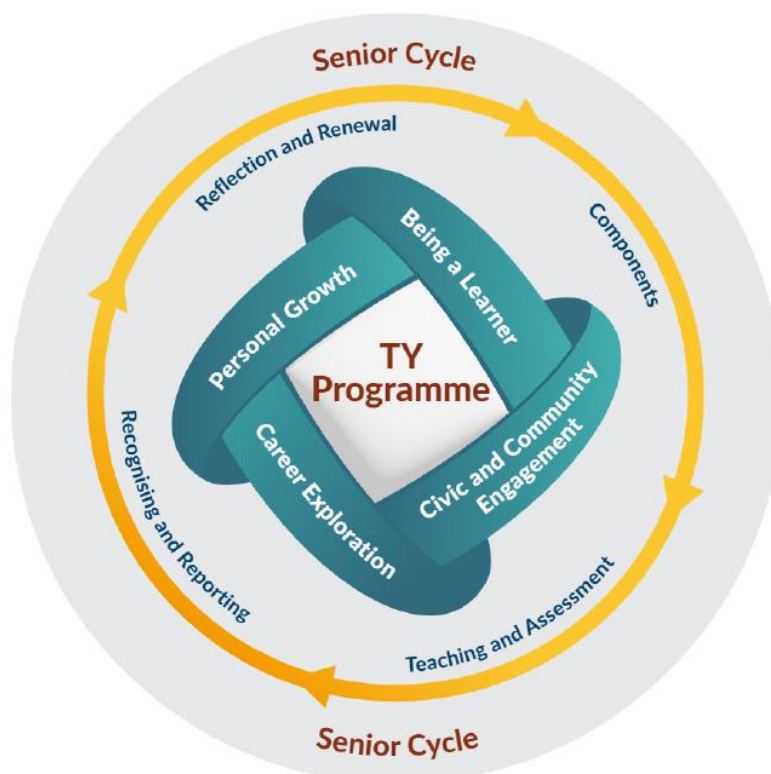
The TY Core Team will include:

- The TY Coordinator.
- TY Year Head and two TY teachers.
- A member of Senior Management Team, where necessary.
- A member of Guidance Department.
- A member of AEN Department.

5. How this Transition Year Programme has been developed.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
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.
Curriculum Dimensions.	Guide schools in how best to steer the design and progression of their TY programme. They provide the design parameters to assist schools in developing, evaluating and renewing their TY programme.
Developmental Indicators.	Are statements within the Student Dimensions which are intended to illustrate how the student progresses and develops through their participation in TY.
Key competencies.	Is an umbrella term which refers to the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions students develop during senior cycle.
Student Dimensions.	Describe the ways in which students can develop in Transition Year (TY) and the experiences that can support this development. The Student Dimensions set out the parameters for the development of the student and are the key foundations upon which TY programmes are designed.
Student Experiences.	Emanate from the Developmental Indicators and provide the opportunities and contexts for the student to learn and develop

This Transition Year Programme has been developed through **Student Dimensions** and **Curriculum Dimensions**.



The Student Dimensions are:

1. Personal Growth Students mature socially and emotionally over the course of the year, developing in areas that include health and wellbeing, autonomy, identity, empathy and leadership.

2. Being a Learner Building on their previous experiences, 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.

3. Civic and Community Engagement 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.

4. Career Exploration Students explore diverse future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing career related competencies.

Each of the four **Student Dimensions** contain a set of developmental indicators and related student experiences. (See Appendix 1)

Student Dimension	Components	TY Components / Student Experience
Personal Growth	Continuity: Physical Education (PE). SPHE	One hour of timetabled PE and SPHE for students each week.
	TY Specific: An array of modules that provide experiences for the development and growth of the student.	Students select two co-curricular 'experiences' from the Experience Lines, each of which is timetabled for one hour per week. Health related activities are timetabled for two hours per week. These are rotated every seven weeks.
	Additional growth experiences: For example – guest speakers, government supported developmental awards, induction, competitions, school wide events (plays, musicals, market days, themed days).	All TY students develop personally by attending workshops brought in e.g. Virtual Driving, Barista etc. Peer Mentoring by taking part in 1 st Year School Buddies Programme. Content creation through podcasting and Video Editing. Academically through Debating classes and Coding classes etc. Entrepreneurship through Mini Company, Trade Fair, Connect Credit Union Competition. They also participate in an annual TY musical. Students may engage as performers, stage designers, costume designers, hair and make-up artists, P.R.
Being a Learner	Continuity: Supporting student learning and development in the areas of Mathematics, English and Irish.	Irish, English and Maths are synchronised and each is timetabled for two hours per week. Additional literacy and numeracy development classes are timetabled.
	Elective: Modules that support, for example, sampling of senior cycle subjects and other areas of learning and development.	Students select seven optional senior cycle subjects to sample throughout the year. Each is timetabled for one hour per week.

	Additional learning experiences: For example, study/research skills, themed learning days, life skills, literacy and numeracy initiatives.	Journaling through completing reflective journal of yearly events on OneNote. Life Skills Training: Master Chef and Bake Off, first aid training. Physical Development with Adventure Trips like Bonding Carlingford Adventure and End of Year Delphi. Students participate in outdoor team challenges like hiking, kayaking, or rock climbing etc. Language Immersion Days in French and Irish.
Civic and Community Engagement.	Our own community: Local out-reach activities, community placement, social enterprise activities, education in cultural diversity.	These components draw from TY specific modules, work and community placements and additional experiences. We have Specialised Academic Classes with the Experience lines added to the timetable, TY maths challenges during Maths week. Stem engagement with Robotics Competitions and Science Projects in Sci-Fest classes.
	Our global community: Education for sustainable development. A meaningful student led personal or collaborative action related to sustainable living.	These components can be supported through, for example, a TY specific module related to education for sustainable development or another relevant student experience. Peer Education Programme where students create lesson plans and teach our 1 st year students. Sports Programmes where Sports Leaders are created to help with teams or Sporting events within the college. Community Projects through our Horticulture Module and working with Louth County Council on sustainable living and growth.
Career Exploration.	Work Placement.	All students participate in a work experience module of two weeks.
	Community Placement.	
	Career Guidance.	All students are timetabled for one class of career guidance per week.
	Additional Career related experiences: For example, guest speakers, tasters in apprenticeships/traineeships/further education/higher education, information days, government supported developmental awards, certified short courses.	Additional appropriate work and community placements are facilitated outside of this window. The College hosts an annual Careers Fair, which TY students attend. Additional career related opportunities are provided throughout the year (eg. alumni and other guest speakers, CV building and Interviewing Skills through Careers class. Online courses where students prepare for work with Manual Handling etc with Dulann School Courses. University Open Day Events Company Visits with Microsoft, Google, Kuka etc.

Section 2:

The Curriculum Dimensions are:

1. Components A combination of continued learning in some subjects, subject sampling, TY specific modules and other components provides a balanced and broad set of experiences which encompass the Student Dimensions.

2. Teaching and Assessment Appropriate and effective pedagogies, with ongoing assessment, supporting students to progress in their learning while also fostering innovative classroom practice.

3. Recognising and Reporting The means by which student learning and achievement in all areas of TY are affirmed and celebrated. Reporting in TY provides a broad picture across all the Student Dimensions.

4. Reflection and Renewal Reviewing, evaluating and updating the TY programme, in a continuous and inclusive manner, enables the evolution of a TY curriculum most suited to the learning and development of students.

Each of the four **Curriculum Dimensions** contain a set of collective and individual learning and teaching practices (**See Appendix 1**).

6. What to expect from St Mary's College Transition Year Programme.

- 1. Academic Modules:** Build on Junior Cycle knowledge while exploring Senior Cycle subjects in a low-pressure setting.
- 2. Work Experience:** Gain real-world exposure to industries of interest.
- 3. Skill Development:** Focus on teamwork, communication, and leadership.
- 4. Community Involvement:** Participate in projects that foster civic responsibility.
- 5. Cultural and Creative Opportunities:** Engage in arts, music, drama, and cultural explorations.

The following range of subjects are available in the Transition Year Programme in St. Mary's College. These subjects reflect the wide range of optional subjects offered at Leaving Certificate; however. The Core subjects of Irish, English, Maths, R.E., P.E., and Guidance are offered as well as taster modules in a wide range of subjects. Further information will be outlined at the information evening.

Sample TY Curriculum			
Subjects	Subjects	Subjects	Subjects
Art	Design & Comm Graphics	Home Economics	Music
Biology	English	Horticulture	Philosophy
Career Guidance	Enterprise Education	Irish	Physical Education
Chemistry	French	Mathematics	Physics
Computer Science	Geography	Politics and Society	Religious Education
Construction Studies	German	Mini-company	Spanish (Basic)
History	Technology	Musical	

Timetable.

Curriculum changes have been undertaken, following consultation, to align with the TY Statement. The core subjects of Irish, English and Maths are synchronised to allow the classes to be split into higher and ordinary level groups. This allows teachers to work on content that suits the students and their ability. We also have an activities day for the students where they get to sample an active afternoon on the timetable. Students get to sample five different activities throughout the year, each student samples the activities for five weeks and rotates. An experience line has also been added to the timetable to offer new and exciting opportunities each year and depending on the staff in the school.

TY Experience Lines.

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the Transition Year (TY) experience. By utilising their unique skills and expertise, teachers can design activities that inspire, engage, and provide meaningful learning opportunities for students.

We have introduced a new Experience for our Transition Year students by using teacher skillset and allowing students to select experiences that they can sample for the year.

By leveraging teacher skills, these experiences can:

- Engage students with varied, dynamic activities.
- Encourage self-discovery, giving students a chance to explore interests they might not have considered.
- Prepare students for future academic, professional, and personal challenges.

Teachers' creativity, passion, and expertise can transform Transition Year into a truly enriching and memorable journey for every student.

Our students are allowed to select two experiences from our experience line on the timetable, they will sample these for the full year. The students rank their favourite from 1 – 6 at beginning of the year and will sample two of these throughout the course of the year.

Sample TY Experience Line								
Sci-Fest	Mechanical Engineering	Philosophy	Yoga	Horticulture	Junk Kouture	Master Chef	Public Speaking	Hair and Beauty

Work Experience.

Students source a two-week placement during the school year. Through work experience, students gain valuable insight into planning for their future and are often better able to make relevant subject choices for Leaving Certificate at the end of the school year.

Purpose of Work Experience in TY.

Career Exploration:

- Helps students understand different industries and job roles.
- Offers a real-world perspective on potential career paths.

Skill Development:

- Enhances workplace skills such as communication, teamwork, punctuality, and problem-solving.

- Provides practical applications of skills learned in school.

Personal Growth:

- Builds confidence and independence.
- Develops a sense of responsibility and work ethic.

Networking:

- Allows students to connect with professionals who can offer advice and mentorship.

Activities.

Each week, Transition Year students engage in a wide range of activities over an afternoon or a full day. Activities are held in the College or off-site in local amenities, some activities provide the opportunity for daytrips by bus.

A sample of the activities enjoyed by Transition Year Students are listed below:

Sample Activities Block				
Drama Workshops	Airbound Trampoline	Energie	Self Defence	Dance Funky Feet

7. Assessment Breakdown

Criteria	Assessment Details	Credits Awarded
Attendance & Punctuality	Graduated bands	Credits towards overall Certificate
Core Subjects	Exams at Christmas and Summer	Credits towards overall Certificate
Senior Cycle Subject Sampling (7 subjects)	Exams at Christmas and Summer	Credits towards overall Certificate
Work Experience	CV & Online Diary Evaluation/Employers Report	Credits towards overall Certificate
Mini Company/Trade Fair	Evaluation of Enterprise idea & Online Report	Credits towards overall Certificate
Activities	Attendance/Performance	Credits towards overall Certificate
Portfolio/Interview	Online Reflections & interview	Credits towards overall Certificate
Extra-Curricular Participation	Range of Activities throughout year	Credits towards overall Certificate
Total	600 Credit Total	

8. Transition Year Programme Application Process.

Application Process.

1. **Information:** The Board of Management, based on the available school resources, determines the number of places in Transition Year, on an annual basis.
2. **Information:** An information meeting with Third year parents is held each year, outlining the various post-Junior Cycle programmes offered in the College.
3. **Application:** Following this meeting, students are required to submit a detailed 'TY: Expression of Interest' application form on or before a specific deadline date, which is decided upon yearly.

This Application Form requires the student to display their research into the Transition Year Programme in St Mary's College. It should outline the commitment that they will make and goals they wish to achieve in the event of a place being offered. Applicants should complete this form in a serious and detailed manner.

Please note, acceptance of the Transition Year application form by the College does not confirm or imply a place on the programme.

4. **Interview:** An interview with a member(s) of 'St Mary's College Transition Year Admissions Committee', where interviews are applicable.

9. Transition Year Programme Selection Criteria/Process.

1. **'St Mary's College Transition Year Admissions Committee' will be responsible for assessing application forms and offering places. The criteria is as follows:**

- Application Form: Completed fully, with detailed responses.
- Attendance and Punctuality: The attendance and punctuality of a student in their previous year(s) / previous school(s) shall be an important factor.
- Evidence of positive engagement with all aspects of college life, inside and outside the classroom.
- Evidence of positive work ethic, engagement in independent and group learning.
- Student Behaviour: The behaviour/disciplinary record of a student in their previous years in St Mary's College – particularly their Third Year - shall be an important factor. Additionally, the behaviour/disciplinary record of a student, (one who wishes to transfer into St Mary's College Transition Year Programme), in their previous school(s) is equally an important factor.

The college reserves the right to refuse to admit a student to the Transition Year Programme whose behaviour in their previous year(s) / school(s) has been deemed unsatisfactory or is a cause for health and safety concerns or where there has not been a satisfactory level of cooperation between the college/previous school(s) parents / guardians.

- Performance at interview, where applicable.
- Age (please note that age is only one factor in the selection process and is not the first arbiter of selection).

2. **Assessment of a student for Transition Year is weighted in the following areas:**

• **Attendance: 20 marks**

The applicant's attendance and punctuality in his/her 3 years of Junior Cycle will be taken into consideration. Positive attendance and punctuality will be rewarded and weighted towards 3rd Year. Students who have a certified absence from a medical practitioner will not be disadvantaged.

90-100% Attendance	20 Marks
85-89% Attendance	15 Marks
80-84% Attendance	10 Marks
75-79% Attendance	5 Marks
75% or less	0 Marks

• **Punctuality**

Students will be awarded for positive timekeeping. Students with more than 10 lates in 3rd year will lose marks for poor punctuality.

5 lates or less	5 Marks
6 – 9 lates	0 Marks
10 lates or more	-5 Marks

• **Engagement with College life: 20 marks**

The applicant's engagement with curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and contribution to wider life of the college (social outreach, student council, clubs and societies, sports).

5 or more recognised activities.	20 Marks
4 recognised activities.	15 Marks
3 recognised activities.	10 Marks
1-2 recognised activities.	5 Marks

- **Work Ethic: 20 marks.**

The applicant's work ethic will be assessed from school reports and teacher comments. As independent work is a considerable component of Transition Year, his/her engagement (participation and work) with independent learning opportunities (for example CBA / project work) will be a considered factor. The following descriptor and marking will be applied for work ethic.

Descriptor	Mark
Excellent	20
Above Expectations/Very Good	16
In Line with Expectations	12
Below Expectations	8
Poor	4
None	0

- **Behaviour: 20 marks**

The applicant's behaviour record in the school in his/her 3 years of Junior Cycle will determine these marks. He/she will be rewarded for excellence in behaviour (recognised in reports/ Behaviour Reports), while deductions will be made for the following:

Positive Behaviour Reports	3 marks per report.
Negative Behaviour (Chronicles).	2 marks deducted per report.
Detention.	1 mark deducted per report.
Suspension.	5 marks deducted per report.

- **Application Form & Interview (where applicable): 20 marks.**

Each application form will be assessed and all applicants will be interviewed by a member of the TY Admissions Committee. In the event of interviews not being possible, the 20 marks weighting will be awarded for the application form only.

Transition Year Programme Admissions Committee.
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3. 'St Mary's College Transition Year Admissions Committee' comprises of:

- St Mary's College Programme Coordinator.
- Principal.
- Deputy Principal(s).
- Third Year Head.

- TY Year Head.
- Member/members of the Transition Year Core Committee.

When all available Transition Year places have been allocated, and if there is an excess of applicants, a ranked waiting list will be created by the 'Transition Year Admissions Committee', based on the criteria above.

Transition Year Programme Late Applications.

In the case of oversubscription to the Transition Year Programme, late applications will go to the end of the waiting list, in the order in which they are received.

Accepting an offer of a place in the Transition Year Programme.

1. When a place is accepted in the colleges Transition Year Programme, a letter of confirmation, advising of acceptance is required (letter may be submitted via email or post).
2. The Transition Year Programme fees may be paid in full at this time; Alternatively, at a minimum, a non-refundable deposit of half the fee must be paid toward Transition Year Programme fees. Alternatively, parents may choose to establish a monthly standing order to spread costings over the course of the year.
3. In accepting a place in Transition Year the student / parent / guardian confirm that the College Code of Behaviour and all other school policies is acceptable and that the student / parent / guardian shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance of same. (Copies of school policies are available on the school website www.maristdundalk.ie and from the school office).

Alternatives to the Transition Year Programme

- The College currently provides three pathways for students beyond Junior Cycle: Transition Year, the Established Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied.
- The Board of Management does not support participation in non-DES programmes in lieu of Transition Year (eg. one year sports academies) and students will not be retained on the school roll in these instances.

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management, St. Mary's College.

Date: 6th February 2025.

Appendix 1: Student and Curriculum Dimensions.

Student Dimensions.

- **Developmental indicators** are intended to guide the student and the school and set out the parameters for the learning and development of the student during TY.
- **Student experiences** are intended to provide a variety of possible opportunities and contexts to support student learning and development consistent with the developmental indicators.

1. Personal Growth: *Students mature socially and emotionally over the course of the year, developing in areas that include health and wellbeing, autonomy, identity, empathy and leadership.*

Developmental indicators:

- 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.

Student experiences

- 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.

2. Being a Learner: *Building on their previous experiences, 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.*

Developmental indicators

- 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.

Student experiences

- Continuity subjects and sampling of subjects with learning designed to develop senior cycle key competencies.
- 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.

3. Civic and Community Engagement: *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.*

Developmental indicators

- 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.

Student experiences

- 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.

4. Career Exploration: *Students explore diverse future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing career-related competencies.*

Developmental indicators

- 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.

Student experiences

- 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 abilities.

Curriculum Dimensions.

1. Components: A combination of continued learning in some subjects, subject sampling, TY specific modules and other components provides a balanced and broad set of experiences which encompass the Student Dimensions.

Components are the means by which most of the student experiences, described in the Student Dimensions, are translated into the school's TY curriculum. The below provides guidance on design parameters for a school's TY programme and indicates where the range of components may provide opportunities for learning and development across all four Student Dimensions. A school's programme may evolve as students identify their own opportunities for growth during the year. Equally important for the successful evolution of the programme is a culture that supports and fosters teacher-led curricular innovations within TY. In this way schools can build additional capacity, offering students a wider range of components, while also supporting and promoting internal professional learning, creativity and collaboration.

All components should be integrated into a TY programme that supports students progressing across the developmental indicators. It is important that TY is distinguished as a standalone year within senior cycle. It should not be used, for example, as a way to explicitly spread leaving certificate subject specification over three years rather than the two years of 5th and 6th year, for which these curricula were designed. Where senior cycle subjects or modules form the basis of a TY component, teachers can collectively use their professional autonomy to decide on the most stimulating and innovative pedagogies, while supporting student progression across the developmental indicators.

2. Teaching and Assessment: Appropriate and effective pedagogies, alongside ongoing assessment, supporting students to progress in their learning while also fostering innovative classroom practice.

The TY Programme Statement promotes and encourages high quality teaching and assessment practices that are aligned to the developmental indicators in each of the four Student Dimensions.

The Teaching and Assessment dimension unifies student experiences across the TY components. It is important that TY is distinguished as a standalone programme while at the same time acknowledging progression and continuity in terms of student development and learning from previous experiences and into the remainder of senior cycle.

Collective and individual classroom practices - TY affords teachers the opportunity to be innovative in devising and delivering high quality broad-based teaching and assessment opportunities to support student learning.

Collective professional practice across TY, coupled with a coordinated approach to assessment are therefore essential aspects of an effective TY programme. TY provides opportunities to create environments that stimulate a collaborative learning culture both inside and outside of the classroom.

The assessment of students' learning and development in TY can be achieved and captured through:

- A TY student portfolio.
- A coordinated approach to assessment

Collective Practices

- Teaching and Assessment across the entire TY programme are characterised by:

- identifying and setting high expectations for all students.
- whole-school practices that respond to the strengths and needs of all students and encourage student inputs and contributions to the programme.
- opportunities for planning, preparation and implementation of teaching and assessment approaches.
- increased opportunities for student involvement, enjoyment and agency in their own learning.
- the provision of experiences that are challenging and engaging, which can stimulate creative critical thinking inside and outside the classroom, and across the TY curriculum.
- sharing of expertise and experience with colleagues in a professional environment, within the school and, where feasible, with other schools.
- gathering and sharing evidence of learning to inform the other Curriculum Dimensions, particularly Recognising and Reporting.
- consistent evaluation of collective practice across the year of the programme, informed by feedback and reflection

Individual Classroom Practices.

- Teaching and Assessment in the classroom are characterised by:
- appropriate student-centred approaches which are aligned with learning outcomes and develop all four Student Dimensions.
- planning of learning opportunities to support each student and address their educational needs.
- preparation of appropriate resources and use of digital technologies.
- opportunities for students to work on extended tasks, such as projects, investigations and competitions to promote ownership of learning and develop rigour in their approaches.
- genuine and meaningful collaboration between students, both within and across TY components. This collaboration, where feasible, can be achieved through team tasks and team projects enhancing group cohesion.
- creating and sharing of success criteria with students to enable peer and self-assessment.
- opportunities for students to experience success within and across curriculum components.
- the use of a variety of modes of assessment, for both summative and formative purposes.
- constructive and timely feedback from the teacher designed to improve learning and development.
- effective questioning and opportunities for the student to give and use feedback.

3. Recognising and Reporting: *The means by which student learning and achievement in all areas of TY are affirmed and celebrated. Reporting in TY provides a broad picture across all the Student Dimensions.*

Recognising.

The development of the student across all four Student Dimensions is one of the aims of TY programmes. It is important to recognise and report on the learning and development of the student in ways that genuinely reflect their level of engagement.

Recognition across the year, from daily classroom interactions to engagement with the broader school community, will itself nurture a deeper sense of belonging and achievement. As the year progresses, student motivation can be enhanced through genuine recognition of their work and achievements.

An end-of-year TY celebration event could be an opportunity for students to publicly demonstrate their development, learning and maturity as young people. Teachers, parents and school community partners can come together to collectively acknowledge the successes and achievements of the entire TY group. It also affords the school the opportunity to recognise students with some meaningful and tangible record of their participation in TY that is informed by the variety of assessment and reporting throughout the year.

Reporting.

There are three elements to reporting in TY, they are:

- the student's TY portfolio.
- student reflection.
- school reporting.

All three elements working together are intended to be part of a broader picture of learning and development of the student during TY. Reporting is managed and coordinated by the TY Coordinator, with support from the senior management team, the TY Core Team and each of the teachers in the TY programme.

The student's TY portfolio.

An individual student portfolio, digital and/or physical, can be a powerful tool for capturing the uniqueness of the student experience in TY. The purpose of a portfolio is to give students the opportunity to apply reflective and critical thinking to their experiences across the four Student Dimensions. In this way, they can evaluate their own experiences and generate a more personalised profile of themselves as a learner and as a maturing young adult. Students can showcase learning and achievements, and review their developmental goals from the start, middle and end of the year. The integration of the student's use of a portfolio into teaching and assessment practice, and the inclusion of a reflective practice component, are intended to support students in the creation of their portfolio. The developmental indicators of each of the four Student Dimensions can be used to inform reflection within the portfolio. Some of the essential elements of a TY portfolio include:

- goal setting and ongoing review of goals.
- a chronological review of student experiences and learning over the year.
- overall progress across each of the four Student Dimensions: Personal Growth, Being a Learner, Civic and Community Engagement, and Career Exploration.
- critical reflections on key learning and achievement.

Student reflection.

The TY portfolio and the school report are further enhanced by a student reflection towards the end of the programme. This is the opportunity for students to speak to their experiences and is based on their critical reflections on key learning and achievements in their portfolio. The school can decide the most appropriate form for their students, such as an end-of-year interview, a short presentation by the student to their peers or a similar mode of student reflection. The student reflection is a form of assessment and can also be a significant learning experience for the student. It affords the school

the opportunity to assess how students have developed across all four Student Dimensions and gives immediate feedback on how their TY programme could be improved.

School reporting.

A broad form of reporting that is aligned to the developmental indicators across all four Student Dimensions is necessary in order to recognise the development of the student. Some form of coordinated approach is required to assess curriculum components taken by the student. The school's report should take account of:

- student development across the developmental indicators for each of the four Student Dimensions.
- assessment of learning in the curriculum components taken by the student.
- accredited and non-accredited micro credentials from recognised bodies.

Recognition by the school of the progress and development of the student could also be presented to each student at a TY end-of-year celebration.

The TY reporting mechanism is supported and affirmed throughout the year by ongoing communication with the home through meetings, term reports, TY bulletins and informal communication between home and school.

4. Reflection and Renewal: Reviewing, evaluating and updating the TY programme, in a continuous and inclusive manner, enables the evolution of a TY curriculum most suited to the learning and development of students.

Embedding reflective practice across all Student and Curriculum Dimensions is a cornerstone of building an effective TY programme in schools. A review undertaken by the TY Core Team and supported by school management could evaluate all four Curriculum Dimensions in order to affirm and improve, where possible, the school's TY programme. This is most effective when informed by evidence across the Curriculum Dimensions, but it is important to consider the manageability of gathering authentic and inclusive evidence.

Review and Evaluation Reviews of the programme itself can be done in a variety of ways such as verbal feedback, online surveys or school community focus groups. This feedback can be supplemented by evidence from other occasions or from forms of assessment, such as the student reflection or TY portfolios, where the student input can be immediate and relevant. The data gathered from these reviews and other occasions could then be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in meeting the developmental indicators across all four Student Dimensions.

Schools need to consider the following broad questions when evaluating their TY programme:

- how is the school's TY programme fulfilling the aspirations of the rationale of the TY Programme Statement?
- how can the aims of the TY Programme Statement be better achieved?
- how is the TY programme supporting development across all four Student Dimensions and how could it be improved?

Each of the four Curriculum Dimensions need to be individually evaluated, considering for example:

- reflecting back - the evaluation needs to consider what worked well and what did not work well in each Curriculum Dimension.

- reflecting forward - the evaluation needs to plan how to build on successes and learn from shortcomings in each Curriculum Dimension.

The task of evaluating the effectiveness of the programme is carried out in contexts that are unique to each school. Contexts can be shaped by, for example, school location and size, costs, whole-school planning for the next academic year, local community needs and access to external learning environments. The process of reflection and renewal would also benefit from a school culture of professional learning, internal and external to the school, coupled with the sharing of expertise and resources through relevant national bodies. In addition, a clear and accessible description of the programme can also provide a focus for ongoing reflection and renewal of the programme, and an additional scaffold within which teachers can plan.

The senior leadership team and Board of Management are key stakeholders, particularly in the reflection and renewal process, and their support is essential for developing an effective TY programme.