



Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

TRANSITION YEAR POLICY

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Transition Year Policy

This policy was prepared by the Transition Year (TY) Core Team on behalf of, and in consultation with Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. Staff, Students, Parents and Board of Management.

School Name and address of school: Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed., Thurles

Description of School: Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. is a co-educational multidenominational school under the management of Tipperary ETB.

Mission Statement of School: At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed we aspire to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that encourages the potential of each person. The mission is realised through our core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect.

Programme Overview and Scope

This policy is aligned to our core values of care, community, respect, equality and excellence in education.

This policy outlines the aims and rationale, programme structure and content, curriculum, assessment and reporting, admission, attendance, student expectations and evaluation of the Transition Year programme at Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. Thurles.

The TY programme is a one-year, optional programme designed to act as a bridge between the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. As a stand-alone programme within the Senior Cycle experience, the TY programme offers a unique opportunity where schools and communities can collaborate to encourage young people to flourish now and into the future. Coláiste Mhuire used the TY Programme Statement and the Guiding Principles for Senior Cycle in the development of this policy.

Aims and Rationale

The main aim of the TY programme at Coláiste Mhuire is to provide a holistic and enriching experience that prepares students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The programme aims to:

- **Broaden educational experience:** Offer a variety of learning experiences outside the traditional classroom setting, including extracurricular activities, trips, and projects.
- **Promote personal development:** Encourage students to take greater responsibility for their learning and actions. This includes fostering self-confidence, maturity, and a positive outlook.
- **Develop key skills:** Enhance a wide range of transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

- 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 responsible local, national and global citizens.
- Encourage active citizenship and to foster an awareness of social and community issues.
- 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 and to provide opportunities for students to explore potential career paths and develop an understanding of the world of work through work placements.
- Nurture the development of the student as a whole person by building on their previous experiences, through a curriculum, which is aligned to the TY Programme Statement.
- To promote the core value of equality by ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and support necessary to participate fully and successfully in the TY programme.

Admission

The TY programme at Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed is optional. All students who have completed the Junior Cycle are eligible to apply. An information evening for parents and students, and information seminars for 3rd Year students, will be arranged.

The admission process (including the information evening and communication) is designed to be fully accessible and takes into account the diversity of family circumstances, ensuring clear, inclusive communication channels are prioritised. The Home school liaison officer is included in this process where necessary.

Following the information presentation, students, in conjunction with their parents, are asked to express interest in the TY programme by a specified date.

All students who apply before the specified date (which is announced at the information evening and in information sent to parents via the school information system) will be accommodated. Students who apply late will be placed on a waiting list.

The Deputy Principal will pass the names of the interested students/parents to the TY Co-ordinator.

1. The TY Co-Ordinator requests that students join the TY Google Classroom for the year group and requests that they complete a TY acceptance form.
2. The TY Acceptance form requests information in relation to Potential Work Experience Placements, Leadership Modules and Base Class Preferences.
3. External applicants must:
 - a. complete the Enrolment form for Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed., to be accepted to the school

- b. complete an expression of interest in the TY programme, and undergo the same process as outlined above.
 - c. external applicants will be subject to the same admission procedures as internal applicants, should there be space to accommodate them.
4. Candidates will be offered a place on the programme and their parents/guardians will be informed by Compass Notification.

Programme Structure and Content

The TY programme is structured around a combination of core subjects, modular courses, and a range of special events and activities. A full breakdown of the programme is available in our schools TY programme statement document.

- **Core Subjects:** These subjects are a continuation of the Junior Cycle curriculum and provide a foundation for Senior Cycle. They include, but are not limited to Irish, English, Maths, Sustainability, Social Studies and a Modern Foreign Language.
- **Modular Courses:** These are short, interest-based courses that expose students to a variety of new subjects and skills. Examples include Japanese, Coding, Business Enterprise, Tourism, and/or practical life skills courses like Driver Theory and Health and Safety.
- **Work Placement:** Students are required to complete four weeks of placements. These placements are a vital part of the programme, allowing students to experience the workplace first-hand and explore potential career interests. We encourage that one of the placements have a community emphasis. Students are responsible for sourcing their own placements, with guidance and support from the TY Co-ordinator, Career Guidance team, Work Experience teacher and other members of the Transition Year team. 6 weeks prior to work placement students must outline where they have chosen to go on work placement. The Core Team will review this with the HSCL to ensure that students are getting the most out of their potential placement.
- **Leadership:** All students are given the opportunity to participate in a leadership endeavour (called the Meitheal programme) within the programme. The Meitheal programme serves as the dedicated leadership stream within the Transition Year curriculum. Rooted in the Irish tradition of *Meitheal*—neighbors working together for a common harvest—this initiative redefines student leadership not as the exercise of authority, but as a practice of service and community cohesion. The programme operates on the principle “*Ní neart go cur le chéile*” (There is no strength without unity), aiming to empower students to take active ownership of the school’s culture and operational success. Examples of leadership streams in the programme included Student Learning, Ethos, Digital Leaders, Internet Safety Ambassadors and Wellbeing Warriors.
- **Special Events and Activities:** The programme includes a range of special events designed to enhance the student experience. These may include the school musical production,

participation in the annual market day, an adventure/outdoor pursuits trip, or participation in charity fundraising initiatives.

- **Community Involvement:** Students are encouraged to participate in community service. This could involve (as examples) volunteering at a local charity, helping with a community event, volunteering at a nursing home, helping with the Tidy Towns, helping with the Thurles market or working with a local primary school. Students complete a Social Studies Module which aspires to develop social awareness and Community Involvement. Students are encouraged to become involved in Social and Community initiatives such as the Shoebox Campaign, Lions Club Young Ambassadors Competition and/or local charity events.

Curriculum

The TY Curriculum of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed is developed by our school and updated annually by the TY Co-Ordinator, the TY Core Team and the TY Teaching Staff in consultation with the Deputy Principals and Principal. The CMCO TY programme is inclusive of all students; embraces diversity; facilitates a sense of discovery; reports more broadly on student learning and development; and values the contribution each student can make to the programme.

The school will decide upon the subjects and modules based on the needs of the students, staff allocations and teacher expertise as well as parental expectation and local resources.

The parameters used by the CMCO TY Core Team in developing their TY programme are described through Student Dimensions and Curriculum Dimensions in line with the Transition Year Programme Statement 2024 which can be found at <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/5849acbf-0326-487a-beec-3db6b5878470/TY-Programme-Statement-ENG-INT.pdf>

Student Dimensions

Personal Growth

Students are encouraged to 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 are encouraged to 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 Exploration

Students can explore future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing practical skills and career-related knowledge with the aim of preparing them for the world of work.

Curriculum Dimensions

Following the introduction of the revised Transition Year Programme Statement in 2024 and attendance by the Deputy Principal and Ty Co-Ordinator at Oide PLE for the Introduction of the revised programme, the TY Steering Committee undertook a review of TY in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Using the tools provided by Oide an audit was conducted by staff in the Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed during the 2024/25 academic year and based on the outcomes of this audit and feedback from students, the new curriculum was developed.

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.

Appropriate and effective pedagogies, alongside ongoing assessment, support students to progress in their learning while also enabling the renewal of classroom practice. To support the school has developed resources to assist teachers. In line with our core value of excellence in education the school is committed to ongoing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for all TY teaching staff, focusing specifically on inclusive teaching methodologies, assessment for learning, and utilising the TY Programme Statement's dimensions to ensure the standard of excellence is consistently delivered across all modules.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment in Transition Year is varied. It is designed to evaluate a student's progress and achievements across all aspects of the programme. The assessment will be based on:

- **Summative Assessment:** Written, practical, oral and aural assessment
- **Portfolio-based assessment:** Students will maintain a digital portfolio of their work, including projects, reflections, and reports from work experience.
- **Continuous assessment:** Teacher-based assessments, including oral presentations, project work, and class participation.

- **Written work:** Students will complete various written assignments throughout the year
- **Exams** in English and Mathematics in December and May.
- **Exhibitions** of Work
- **Report** of Work Experience
- **Student Reflection:** Pupil Diary/Logbook of Personal Progress
- **Records** of Skills and Competencies gained

Reporting in TY provides a broad picture across all the Student Dimensions affirming and celebrating student learning and achievement in all areas of the TY programme.

A comprehensive report will be issued to parents/guardians at the end of the year, detailing the student's involvement and achievement in the programme across the four Student Dimension Areas including a summary of their work placement.

Credit System

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. operates a Credit System for accumulating Credits towards Graduation and Certification from the programme. Students are notified about this.

Certification

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. will award a TY Certificate of Completion, Pass, Merit or Distinction Level on completion of the TY programme. Modular Courses completed during the TY programme are certified as appropriate by the school or outside bodies or agencies.

Presentation of all certificates will take place at the annual end of year graduation ceremony.

The overall TY Student of the Year Award will be presented to the student who, in the collective opinion of all staff, made the greatest contribution to TY during the Year. In recognition of the contribution made by International students to TY, a “TY International Student of the Year” award is also presented.

Attendance

Attendance will be monitored carefully. To ensure fairness to all students and to maintain the integrity of our planned school trips, we have a general attendance stipulation of 80% for participation in these trips. This helps ensure students are actively engaged with the TY programme.

However, we understand and fully support students who wish to engage in extra Transition Year experiences outside of the core school programme. These opportunities can be valuable for their

personal and educational growth. We recognise, however, that these additional experiences students undertake could impact their regular attendance. To help us support these enriching opportunities while also ensuring students don't miss out on school trips (which do not clash with these additional experiences) due to these commitments, we request that a form be completed. For experiences over 2 weeks, parents are asked to arrange a meeting with the TY Co-ordinator.

Where absence is due to illness, the submission of a medical certificate is taken into account when calculating the 80% attendance.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the programme. A high standard of attendance, punctuality, and a positive attitude are essential for a successful Transition Year. Students are expected to take ownership of their learning and engage enthusiastically with all the opportunities presented. When students approach TY with a **positive attitude and proactive mindset** they enjoy a successful year. We challenge our students to take full ownership of their learning, stepping outside their comfort zones to engage enthusiastically with every opportunity - from work experience to community in action. In TY, the most significant rewards go to those who lean in, speak up, and show up.

Evaluation

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.

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. embraces the requirement for ongoing evaluation and modification of the TY programme. This will take place annually through appropriate methods such as the staff TY Core Team, the TY student learner council, surveys and feedback from Students, Parents and TY Teachers. Results of and recommendations from such evaluations will be utilised in planning future TY programmes.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated biannually to ensure the programme remains relevant and continues to meet the needs of the students and the school community.