



# CLONGOWES

CLONGOWES WOOD COLLEGE SJ

## TRANSITION YEAR 2025 - 2026 PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET



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# 1. Clongowes Transition Year 2025 – 2026: Information Summary

Transition Year (TY) is compulsory in Clongowes and offers students space to learn, mature and develop through a broad variety of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

- Students have a full timetable of 30 class periods per week. These include classes in:
- Core subjects: English, Irish/EAL, Mathematics and French/German/Spanish. - Examinations in these subjects at Christmas and Summer.
- Taster subjects for Leaving cert: Science Subjects, Business subjects, History, Geography, Music, PE, Drama, Latin, etc.
- TY specific subjects: Career Ed., Creativity, Green Schools, Sustainability, Mini Company, Development Ed., Health Ed., Computer Science, and much more.
- Social Awareness programmes such as Social outreach and Age Action which are central to TY in Clongowes and to developing “Men for Others”.
- A core element of TY in Clongowes is career guidance and subject choice.
- Students participate in and attend a wide range of workshops, seminars, class trips, university visits, visiting speakers and activities throughout the year. These take place on average once a week and have an impact on regular classes. There is a charge of **€330** per student to cover participation in all of these. This is charged in September and is used to top up the TY budget which is drawn from the normal fee.
- In addition to the timetabled classes we run optional evening courses in Cookery, Life Saving, Yoga, Scuba Diving and Tech Create. There may be extra charges to cover the cost of these.
- Sport and the full range of co-curricular activities such as music instrumentation, orchestra, choir etc. run as normal.
- Students will go on a residential outdoor education trip for two nights in October. Boys will need to return to Clongowes after the September break with the appropriate clothing
- Students are timetabled for at least one hour regular study and one hour computer study most evenings.
- Students will spend at least three weeks in addition to normal breaks and vacations away from Clongowes on work experiences – two one week placements – **first week beginning 20th October and second week beginning 13th April and social placement - 1 week beginning 24th November.**
- If students do not go on the Jesuit Ethos Cultural Experience in May they must go home to do work experience or social placement instead.
- Students may arrange up to **three** extra work experience/social placements throughout the year-see Work Experience Section.
- Students and parents who are interested in taking part in our European exchange programme should read the guidelines for participation and only then apply. No student is guaranteed a place on our exchange programme and all applicants must be approved for participation by a selection committee. Please consider carefully whether your son is a suitable candidate and/or if you are in a position to host an exchange student. Flexibility is essential.
- Families who are restricted in their ability to host an exchange student may wish to arrange a private stay abroad for their son. They should apply to the Headmaster for a leave of absence for the duration.

- All students are encouraged to participate in our annual TY charity fundraiser “The Duck Push” which runs events across the school year
- Clongowes TY Certificates are awarded with Distinction, Merit or Pass at the TY Graduation Ceremony.
- Students are assessed on their Portfolio and an interview in May.

## 2. General Introduction To Clongowes Wood College TY Programme

### 2.1. Clongowes Wood College Mission Statement

The mission of Clongowes Wood College is to educate its pupils according to the vision of the Gospel and the best traditions and highest standards of Jesuit schooling, as expressed in The Characteristics of Jesuit Education.

Clongowes is a Catholic boarding school located in beautiful surroundings twenty miles from Dublin and draws its pupils from all over Ireland and abroad. It aims to create an open, happy, stimulating, mutually respectful and supportive community where young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and academic abilities in a balanced, integrated and generous way, striving for excellence in all that they do.

It is our conviction that human fulfilment is to be found through faith in Jesus Christ and service of Ireland and the world in imitation of Him. In partnership with parents, we seek to form pupils who will strive to develop that faith and to give Christian leadership through the example of their lives and their commitment to a renewal of the Church and a more just, inclusive and caring society.

The Transition Year will offer students space to learn, mature and develop through a broad variety of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers of TY in Clongowes are informed by the awareness that we have a responsibility to care for the individual student, regardless of their competence, aptitude or interest (*cura personalis*) in keeping with the principles of Ignatian pedagogy.

### 2.2. Preamble

It is the policy of the school that all students who attend will take part in the Transition Year Programme.

In keeping with the DoE's Transition Year Programme Statement, The Transition Year Programme in Clongowes Wood College aims to promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of students and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society.

There are three broad aims:

- Education for maturity with special emphasis on social awareness and increased social competence.
- Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.
- Promotion of general, technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning by creating space and opportunities for meaningful, enjoyable learning experiences through which the key competencies of the student can be developed in the classroom.

## 2.3. Management Policies

It is school policy:

- To adhere to the guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills and to devise a programme consistent with the aims laid down for Transition Year.
- To support a Transition Year Core Team established to assist the Coordinator in his/her work.
- To provide parents of Transition Year students with information about the programme.
- To provide time within the timetable to enable the Coordinator to do his/her work.
- To encourage staff to be flexible in their teaching methods, in assessments and in facilitating the demands and overall aims of the programme.
- To provide flexible study arrangements conducive with the running of the programme.
- To provide a learning structure which promotes maturity.
- To be learning-led rather than exam-led.
- To cooperate with all educational partners, especially parents, in providing a broad and enriching educational experience.
- To provide experiential learning through such experiences as Work Experience, Social Work Experience, Social Outreach Programme, Outdoor Pursuits etc.
- To learn through networking with other schools and social agencies.
- To encourage variety and learning styles.
- To develop life skills.
- To enable students to become independent learners.
- To promote compensatory and remedial education.
- To use a variety of methods of assessment including oral, aural, and written exams, project work, unit work, continuous assessment etc.
- To provide certification which will be school-based.
- To ensure on-going review of the TY programme with a view to improving all aspects.

## **2.4. The Aims of TY in Clongowes**

- To inspire students to become “Men for Others”
- To give students opportunities to discover and develop their own individual gifts and strengths.
- To enable students to become more independent-both as learners and thinkers.
- To allow students to experience a year where the emphasis will be on individual responsibility.
- To enable the nurturing of thinking, caring, articulate and self-confident people.
- To provide students with the skills and supports necessary to discover their individual talents, aptitudes and abilities.
- To enable students to understand their own educational needs.
- To facilitate the development of those skills and competences necessary to cope successfully with the students current stage of development.

## **2.5. Assessment in TY in Clongowes Wood College**

It is school policy:

- That assessment in TY will adhere to the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL)
- To encourage staff to be flexible in assessments and in facilitating the demands and overall aims of the programme.
- That TY be learning-led rather than exam-led.
- To use a variety of methods of assessment including oral, aural, and written exams, project work, unit work, continuous assessment, an online portfolio, as well as an end of year interview.
- To provide certification which will be school-based.

## **2.6. Evaluation of TY in Clongowes Wood College**

It is school policy to ensure on-going review of the TY programme with a view to improving all aspects.

Students complete a written evaluation of their TY at the end of the year. This is collated and reviewed by the TY Team and changes are made where appropriate and practical.

The TY Core Team engages in both reflecting back - considering what worked well and what did not work well in each Curriculum Dimension as well as reflecting forward - planning how to build on successes and learn from shortcomings in each Curriculum Dimension.

### 3. Programmes for individual subjects and modules

#### 3.1. Peeling the layers of Clongowes Wood College TY Programme

Clongowes devises its own timetabled programme to cater for the needs of its students. This is done in accordance with the Department of Education & Science guidelines and school and community resources. The programme is designed and delivered by the Coordinator, core team and teaching staff in consultation with management. Essentially a Transition Year programme offers students a broad and balanced curriculum.

1. Calendar Layer
2. Transition Specific Layer
3. Sampling Layer
4. Core subject Layer

##### 3.1.1. Calendar Layer

- Work Experience Placements
- Visiting Speakers
- Outdoor Education
- Skills Days & Workshops
- Social Awareness Placement
- TY Ignatian Camino Pilgrimage

##### 3.1.2. List of Subjects and Modules TY Specific Layer

Mini Enterprise	Computing
Green Schools	Social Outreach & Age Action
Logic	Life Saving*
Sustainability	Yoga*
Careers Education	Cookery *
Creativity	Health Education
Film Studies	Development Education

\*Additional Cost

### **Sampling Layer**

- Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Ag Science)
- Latin
- Music
- History
- Geography
- Business Studies (Accountancy, Business Studies, Economics)
- PE
- Drama

### **Core Subject Layer**

English	Physical Education
Religion	Mathematics
Irish	French/German/Spanish

## **4. Organisational Details**

While overall responsibility for the Transition Year will rest with senior management, the day-to-day management and coordination is carried out by the Transition Year Coordinator.

### **4.1. Names of Coordinator and Core Team Members**

TY Coordinator & Academic Year Head	Mr. Liam McGovern
Coordinator of Work Experience and Social Placements	Mr. Noel Murray
Acting Lower Line Prefect	Mr. Steven Gray
Syntax Prefect	Mr. Joe Curran
Assistant Lower Line Prefect	Ms. Michaela Meagher
Coordinator of GAISCE Awards	Ms. Patricia Frampton
Director of Ethos	Ms. Elisabeth Clarke
Guidance Counsellor	Ms. Maria Shaw
Coordinator of French Exchanges	Mr. Francis Marron

Coordinator of German Exchanges	Ms. Irene O'Rourke
Coordinator of Spanish Exchanges	Mr. Gerardo Leon Moguer
Coordinator of the Social Outreach Programme	Ms. Elisabeth Clarke
Coordinator of Age Action	Mr. Francis Marron
Coordinator of Learning Support	Ms. Patricia Frampton

## 4.2. How the Timetable Works

The proposed weekly structure comprises 27 classes of 60 minute duration and 3 classes of 40 minute duration.

Subject	Number of Classes Per Week
English & Literacy	2 & 1
Irish & Cultural Studies/Athletic Development/EAL	3
French/German/Spanish	3
Maths & Numeracy	2 & 1
Science (rotation)	3
Religion	2
Module 1: (Latin, Music, Development Education, Creativity, Drama)	2 Students taking Latin do so for the year, the other 3 subjects for one third of the year each.
Module 2: (History, Art, Health Education, Film Studies)	2 Students take each subject for a quarter of the year each.
Module 3: (Ag Science, Computing, Logic, Geography)	2 Students take each subject for a quarter of the year each.
Module 4: (Physical Education, Business, Careers Education, Green Schools)	3 1 hour per week for each subject.
Social Outreach/ Mini-Co./Age Action	2 Students take each subject for a third of the year each.
TY Coordinators Meeting/ Project Skills	1

### 4.3. Main Calendar Features

#### Key Dates 2025/26

<b>2025</b>	
<b>Wednesday 27th August</b>	Term begins for Syntax (arrival by 20.30)
<b>Friday of September Break</b>	Parents Information Meeting
<b>Thursday 9th- Saturday 11th October</b>	Outdoor Education Trip to Delphi
<b>TY Retreats</b>	6, 13th, 20th October
<b>20th-24th October</b>	Work Experience One (Leads into Halloween Break)
<b>24th-28th November</b>	Social Awareness Placement (leads into December break)
<b>Friday 12th December</b>	Christmas Exams
<b>2026</b>	
<b>24th Jan- 1st February</b>	Ski Trip
<b>Fri 13th March</b>	Parent Teacher Meeting
<b>Mon 13th - Sat 18th April</b>	Work Experience Two
<b>13/14 th- 17/18th April or 27th April to 1st May</b>	Ignatian Camino Pilgrimage
<b>14th May-21st May</b>	Portfolio Assessment
<b>26th May</b>	Graduation Ceremony

#### 4.4. Work Experience and Social Awareness 2025/2026 KEY DATES

Please read our policy on work experience before confirming placements. The policy can be found here:

[TY Work Experience and Social Placement Policy](#)

Queries about work experience should be directed to Mr. Noel Murray ([nmurray@clongowes.net](mailto:nmurray@clongowes.net)), the TY Placement coordinator

##### Work Experience One

Input of Data	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October
Work Experience	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October
Thank You Letter	Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> November
Report	Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> November

##### Work Experience Two

Input of Data	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April
Work Experience	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April – Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> April
Thank You Letter	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April
Report	Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May

##### Social Awareness Placement

Input of Data	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> November
Work Experience	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> November
Thank You Letter	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December
Report	Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> December

Note: Parents should satisfy themselves that places of employment/social placements are safe environments for their sons.

## **4.5. Other Information**

- Host families are responsible for exchange students who are here during these weeks & organise work experience if possible. Exchange students may not stay in Clongowes during placement weeks.
- Students must complete a SAP during the year (Even if a student is on exchange in December) and this should be in their local community. Exceptions may occur in certain circumstances.
- I would encourage students to complete their report the week of their WE/SAP and not procrastinate until their return to Clongowes.
- A cover letter and insurance details will be forwarded to the employer 2 weeks before the placement commences. This is determined by how quickly students enter details on the system.

### **Additional Placements:**

Clongowes is happy to facilitate students who wish to take part in additional educational courses, work experience and social placements outside of the scheduled weeks provided they are fully engaged in the TY programme in the school while here.

Students should apply by email to the TY Work Experience/Social Placement Coordinator at least two weeks in advance of any such extra placements. The number of students granted permission for such extra placements will be limited in any one week in order to minimise disruption to normal classes. Students should do no more than three extra work experience/social placement weeks.

## **4.6. Assessment & Certification**

### **4.6.1. Assessment**

Students are assessed in a variety of ways during TY. These include:

- Headmaster's Reports for diligence and attainment every five weeks based on class work, homework and/or class tests.
- Formal Examinations in Core subjects at Christmas and Summer
- Written reports on TY Activities, Work Experience & Social Placements.
- Presentation of their individual Web-based Portfolio.
- End of year interview.

#### 4.6.2. Certification

All of the information from above is collated and a three person committee consisting of the TY Coordinator, Syntax Academic Year Head and Lower Line prefect meet and decide on the appropriate level of Certification.

- Certificates are awarded to students at three levels
- Distinction
- Merit
- Participation

#### 4.7. Finances & Costs

In addition to the normal school fee the following approximate extra charges are foreseen in TY.

Outdoor Ed. Trip	9-11 October	€300 (TBC)
Skills, Workshops, Visiting Speakers, Buses & Excursions	Sep – May, Billed for in September	€330
Ethos Trip (optional)	May (full payment for flights at time of booking)	€1000 (TBC)
Cookery Course (optional)		€100
Life Saving (optional)		TBC
Yoga Classes (optional)		Free

Charges for Exchanges (Flights etc.), Orchestra and Rugby trips are not included here.

If in exceptional circumstances parents wish to withdraw their son for Transition Year the following charges apply in order to retain the student's place for Poetry.

50% of the annual school fee is payable in June of Grammar year followed by a non-refundable deposit of the first moiety of Poetry fees in January of Transition Year.

There will be no reduction in fees for students who go on exchange or take a shorter leave of absence during the year.

#### 4.8. Evaluation

The TY Coordinator in conjunction with teachers, students and management regularly evaluate the efficacy of the Transition Year modules, subjects, activities and events and discuss any necessary changes. At the end of each year the TY Core team meets to discuss any recommendations or changes that may be appropriate.

Students complete a written evaluation of their TY at the end of the year. This is collated and reviewed by the Transition Year Coordinator and changes are made where appropriate and practical.

#### 4.9. Gaisce Award



Gaisce, the President's Award is Ireland's National Challenge Award, the country's most prestigious and respected individual award programme, and a challenge from the President of Ireland, to young people between 15 and 25 years of age. Gaisce is a member of the International Award Association of National Challenge Awards Worldwide.

There are three different types of award that students can earn – bronze, silver and gold. Transition Year students will initially work towards the Bronze Award.

##### 4.9.1. How to earn an award

There are 4 different challenge areas. To earn an award, students will need to participate in each of the 4 challenge areas. Our 4 challenge areas and time commitments:

1. **Community Involvement**- 1 hour a week for a total of 13 weeks.
2. **Personal Skill**- 1 hour a week for a total of 13 weeks.
3. **Physical Recreation**- 1 hour a week for a total of 13 weeks.
4. **Adventure Journey**- Undertake a 2 day, 1 night adventure journey in a group.

**Additional Time**- Each participant must choose one challenge area to complete for an additional 13 weeks, resulting in 26 weeks of participation in one category.

##### Example:

In the example below, the participant uses the additional hours in the Physical Recreation challenge.

##### Community Involvement:

Transition Year Social Outreach with K.A.R.E. Total 13 weeks

**Personal Skill:**

Piano

Total 13 weeks

**Physical Recreation:**

Rugby and further training (Athletic Club, running, etc.) 1

3 weeks plus an additional 13 weeks.

Total 26 weeks

Upon completion, participants will be presented with their Bronze Gaisce Award at the TY graduation ceremony in May

#### **4.10. Integrity of the TY Programme**

##### **Special Requests/Absences Throughout the Year**

Each year we publish a school calendar of breaks and vacations together with other important dates in the life of the school. We circulate this well ahead of the start of the year.

Each year, too, we appeal to parents to respect this calendar and not to arrange family holidays during school time. There is always a temptation to take boys out of school at other times and this may mean some boys being absent during exam periods, at times of special events, at times of group projects, and, especially, at the beginning and end of the various terms. This can be a temptation for all parents and I appeal to you not to succumb to the temptation during this year.

I am aware that many parents consider that Transition Year provides a suitable opportunity for boys to go abroad to learn a language. The school does its best to provide exchanges for as many boys as possible – if they are deemed suitable candidates for an exchange. As no such year exists within the French or German school programme, Clongowes is dependent on the good will of its partner schools to agree to share in the organisation of exchanges and our numbers are limited accordingly.

Parents sometimes ask about private arrangements for France/Germany/Spain. If you wish to make a private arrangement for your son, and give notice well in advance of your intentions, it may be possible for the school to give permission for this provided it doesn't conflict with the Transition Year programme for the period in question and provided that your son is considered to be a suitable candidate for such an arrangement. Clearly, no arrangements should be made nor commitments entered into until permission has been obtained.

However, if sufficient notice is not given, or if there is conflict with the school programme, then permission may not be given. This may not be a popular decision with everyone, but it is vital to maintain the integrity of the Transition Year programme not alone for each individual pupil but for the year as a whole. If very large numbers are absent it will affect the

quality and continuity of teaching and the programme itself and ultimately may not serve either our students or the incoming German and French students well.

## **4.11. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is a Transition Year?**

A one year programme taken after the Junior Certificate and before the Leaving Certificate Programme.

### **What's the purpose of the Transition Year Programme?**

To promote maturity:

- Maturity in studies by making students more self-directed learners through the development of general, technical and academic skills
- Maturity in relation to work and careers by developing work-related skills
- Personal maturity by providing opportunities to develop communication skills, self-confidence and a sense of responsibility
- Social maturity by developing greater 'people' skills and more awareness of the world outside school

### **Who decides on the Transition Year Programme?**

Each school devises its own TY programme. The teaching staff draws up a programme in the light of the Transition Year Guidelines and the Resource Material published by the Department of Education and Science. They also consider students' needs, parents' views, employers and the wider interests of the local community. Each year the programme should be evaluated, with inputs from all these parties, and revised by the teaching staff.

### **What subjects are studied?**

This varies from school to school but in every school students follow a timetable as they do in other years. Most programmes work towards getting a balance between some continuation of essential core subjects, a tasting and sampling of other subjects, a variety of distinctive courses designed to broaden students' horizons and some modules and activities specifically aimed at promoting the maturity that is central to the whole Transition Year ideal.

### **Even if all these programmes are different, surely there are some features common to the programme in a lot of schools?**

Many schools offer modules, short courses on particular topics. Most schools offer a work experience programme. Mini-enterprise, where students set up and operate a real business, is a popular way of learning. The use of visiting speakers as well as trips beyond the classroom is a feature of many programmes. Project work, where students undertake

independent research, usually more extensive than traditional 'homework', is also common to many programmes.

### **What about exams?**

Assessment is a key part of any worthwhile learning programme. Transition Year is an opportunity to move beyond the narrow focus of end-of-year, written exams. The emphasis is on varied and on-going assessment with students themselves becoming involved in diagnosing their own learning strengths and weaknesses. Project work, portfolio work and exhibitions of students' work are also encouraged. Each individual school makes its own arrangements for reporting to parents and for the certifications of students who complete a TY programme.

### **Can the Transition Year be part of a three-year Leaving Certificate programme?**

The Transition Year programme is a school-designed, distinctive programme and should not constitute year one of a three-year Leaving Certificate. 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. The exploration of any Leaving Certificate material should be in a way that is original and stimulating and significantly different from the approach taken during a two-year Leaving Certificate programme.

### **Is Transition Year available to all students?**

TY is compulsory for all students in Clongowes.

### **Is Transition Year suited to all students?**

With its emphasis on development and maturity, all young people can benefit from the programme. Transition Year, in particular, can allow for the development of an individual's multiple intelligences-linguistic, logico-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. The Transition Year programme can also develop key skills for the 21st century such as the three Ts: thinking, teamwork and technology.

### **How are parents involved?**

Parents' understanding of and support for student learning in TY is a key factor in a successful Transition Year experience. Some parents make their particular expertise available to the school during the TYP. Parents should encourage their sons and daughters to avail of the numerous opportunities offered by this unique programme.

## **4.12. Parent Experiences of Transition Year**

'From a parents perspective TY has been a fantastic opportunity for Tom! He really made the most of it. In his particular case, having dedicated time to explore potential career opportunities was the clincher. He is quite driven, so he jumped into work experience and sporting opportunities that interested him and was able to delve deeper into what they had to offer. He also did a few weeks of voluntary work (the 7am shift!) at a local animal shelter and was exposed to other work experience related opportunities in finance & risk management some of which he decided were less suited to him. The extracurricular activities provided by the school such as skiing, forthcoming Camino & the trip to Eclipse Island served to provide him the opportunity to bond with his mates outside the formal school setting and these are a

nice addition to the overall TY experience. That said, we were very proactive in setting up opportunities for him in advance, and our view is that some parental involvement is a must.'

'From a parents perspective all you want is for your son to enjoy a year and really try new things. Dara has loved TY , he comments all the time about how much he enjoyed and is enjoying the year.

Dara has gotten to do work experience and try different businesses and one of the reasons I love this is that at 15 the pressure on kids to know what they want to be , when they have never been anything but a student is immense. TY work experience is really good at signalling what you may want to do but equally what you don't want to do.

Dara has gotten to travel and make new friends through TY and his experience has been top class. He really loved it.

Sporting wise Dara got to take a year out from rugby , although he played he didn't take it as seriously as he previously had, this allowed him also to pursue basketball which he loves. This I know he is also grateful for as basketball is now his game of choice.

While Dara has decided over the course of the year what he wants to study in 3rd level, the experiences, the travel , meeting new people , talking to peers from other schools and work experience have helped him enormously to shape his thinking.'

After making the decision to send our son to Clongowes Wood College we have to say that we are delighted with the decision we made. From day one the correspondence with the school staff has been excellent. We had concerns like, would our son fit into TY coming from schooling abroad, would he make friends, could he manage the boarding life? These were all positively answered and more. He has made some great friends, embraced new academic subjects and seems to be organised and managing his time well. He quickly got up to speed with the routine, the laundry bags were an early challenge but he managed! His prefects team have been very supportive and always on hand when we needed them. Academically he is doing very well. In TY the boys are given the opportunity to take different subjects which broadens their options for the Leaving Cert subject choices. After each term so far we have received his school report which allows us to see his grades and his efforts. There is a strong focus on career guidance and our son is meeting regularly with the career guidance teacher which is helping him to understand his third level education options. The school also offers many extra curricular programmes including sports, music, choir, diving, first aid, cooking, trips away which all help to develop comradery, confidence and character. We would highly recommend CWC to anyone thinking of sending their son to boarding school in Ireland.

We as parents found TY to be a fabulous year especially with the help of Mr McGovern and Mr Murray . It's a great year for the boys to travel abroad without parents & travel with their friends to improve on their foreign languages etc. It was fantastic our son learned how to ski & the ski trip was amazing . The boys have cooking lessons, first aid courses and they can work on the farm in the school. The Peter Mc Verry experience in Dublin was fantastic. The Duck Push, they can go on the Camino . They are never bored & Clongowes gives them a wonderful choice of activities. I'll miss TY year .....

#### **4.13. How Parents can help and support their son in Transition Year**

- Encourage your son to make the most of the Transition Year programme. It really is a year from which the benefits accrued directly relate to the effort put into it. Keep in touch with what is current.
- Demonstrate as much interest in your child's daily educational activities as you would when he is following a Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate programme.
- If you do not understand the rationale behind any TY activity the school organises, ask the TY Co-ordinator, or any of the support team.
- Familiarise yourself with all the 'extra' and optional opportunities the school plans to provide during the year. Students may only convey what they are interested in to their parents and many valuable opportunities may be overlooked. Sometimes parents only discover what was on offer at the end of the year!
- Acclimatise yourself to having a student who will not necessarily have traditional 'homework'. Transition Year opens doors to 'other ways of learning'. The TY student will tend to have other forms of homework. He may have projects to complete questionnaires and surveys to conduct or oral presentations to prepare. Should your son report that he has little or no work to do, do contact the Academic Year Head.
- Please continue to develop good levels of communication with your son's prefect.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that your son is well motivated and has a positive attitude towards the programme.
- If you have an area of interest e.g. Local Politics or an expertise e.g. Interview skills, or willing to give or organise a talk or workshop consider offering your services to the TY Coordinator at +353 (0)45 838202 or [lmcgovern@clongowes.net](mailto:lmcgovern@clongowes.net)

#### **4.14. What every Student should know about Transition Year**

- The Transition Year will offer students space to learn, mature and develop.
- The Department of Education and Science encourages us to design our own Transition Year Programme to meet the needs of our students.
- Students will be offered a broad variety of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.
- Throughout TY, your teachers are encouraged to promote activity-based learning, research skills and self-directed learning.
- Transition Year, like each other year of a six-year cycle through second-level schooling, has its own unique contribution to make to each student's development and education.
- Students are encouraged to see TY as providing opportunities to discover personal strengths and to develop their potential. Thinking in terms of 'multiple intelligences' –

linguistic, logico-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist – can be helpful in this regard.

- In addition to traditional style homework, TY students are also asked to undertake projects, assignments, interviews, research and other demanding tasks.
- The Transition Year programme will assist young people to connect with adult and working life through the provision of work experience and career guidance.
- While TY presents opportunities to learn without the pressure of external examinations, assessment is an essential part of every TY programme. We will be assessing our students using varied forms of assessment such as written, practical, oral and aural, portfolios, reports, project displays, exhibitions of work, and personal journals
- Each year we will evaluate how well we have run the TY programme. Listening to student opinions is an important part of such evaluations.

## 5. Guidelines for Participation in European Exchange Programmes and Leave of Absence in TY 2025 - 2026

Please give serious consideration to the pros and cons of the exchange programme for your son before making any decision and familiarise yourselves fully with this document.

### **Consider**

- Is a language exchange your son's priority for TY?
- Going on exchange means hosting an exchange partner for a similar length of time.
- Can you host an exchange student over breaks and long weekends?
- When can you not host an exchange?
- What dates suit your circumstances best?
- If you live abroad, what arrangements can be put in place for hosting an exchange partner?
- Will your son have commitments to sports teams or other activities?
- What plans has your son for work experience and social placement?

### **5.1 Pre-Application Stage**

Before you agree to allow your son's name to go forward for selection, the following obligations need to be noted by both parents and sons:

### **5.2 Speaking the Foreign Language**

It is important that your son be prepared to enter into the spirit of the exchange and attempt to speak the language of that country consistently. You need to be confident that your son

will avoid speaking English to students in the host school or to other Clongowes students who are on exchange. The more he speaks the language, the more he will learn, the more he learns, the more he will enjoy himself.

### **5.3 Care of Exchange Partner**

Your son's exchange partner should be regarded as a 'substitute son' during his stay in Ireland and the following outlines some of the care to be provided.

You will:

- meet him when he arrives at the airport and bring him to Clongowes at the appropriate time.
- provide and organise clean and comfortable bedding for his time while boarding at Clongowes and make arrangements for his laundry.
- ensure that in the case of exchanges of a duration of one month or less that the exchange partner is brought out most week-ends (Friday to Sunday evening) and for longer exchanges that the exchange partner is brought out on as many Sundays as possible and typical calendar breaks. Encourage your exchange partner to ring you regularly from Clongowes to arrange pick-up times etc.
- be responsible for him during all school breaks and holidays during his stay, as you would for your own son.
- if your exchange partner is here during a time when Transition Year students are out of College on Work Experience Placement or Social Awareness Placement, make arrangements for him to have an appropriate placement and to accommodate him in your home during that time.
- In general make him feel part of the family and he should have a sense of being welcome and at home with you. It should go without saying that your son would be welcomed in a similar manner by his host family.
- Costs, see 1.4 below.
- There is an expectation of students who have accepted an exchange place, to give assistance in the care of other exchange partners in Clongowes before or after their own period of exchange.
- Not all Clongowes families are in a position to host an exchange partner for a variety of reasons. We would be very grateful to hear from families who are in a position to host more than one student so that a Clongowes student would be able to participate in our exchange programmes.

### **5.4 Your son's behaviour while on exchange**

You are advised to discuss expectations in this area directly with your exchange family. Our exchange students must abide by the rules of the home. You should also be aware of different attitudes in your son's host family e.g. attitudes to drinking habits and curfew times and permission to be away from home for activities etc. Very often attitudes can be stricter or more relaxed in this regard especially concerning drinking.

In Germany for example, the legal age for the purchase and consumption of beer and wine is sixteen. Some schools have a bar or “Partykeller” which may be opened on two evenings a week. Students aged sixteen and over are allowed to drink two beers on such evenings. Spirits are strictly forbidden. If a student is suspected of having consumed too much alcohol they may be breathalysed by school authorities. Failure to comply with the rules while abroad may lead to a student being sent home.

If your son is chosen, he will be representing Clongowes as an ambassador abroad and the normal school standards should govern behaviour in every situation while on exchange. It would be very helpful if you discussed with your son the standards you would expect of him while he is abroad, as a representative of his family and school. Also be aware that your son will need to plan his recreation time carefully (in Germany the school day can finish at 1pm.) and endeavour to make the most of this opportunity. Another matter you may wish to discuss is that of religious observance, especially Mass and advise your exchange family of your requests.

### **5.5 Costs**

Host families should pay for all school related expenses. Transfers between countries are covered by respective families.

It is appropriate to also pay for outings e.g. cinema trips, days out with friends (treats), admissions e.g. museum entrance and transport (buses) to activities outside of school time.

Exchange partners are expected to pay for any personal or luxury items which are incurred using his own pocket money. You are advised to make this clear when communicating with your partner family. It is understood that this arrangement is reciprocated abroad.

### **5.6 Application Stage**

If you are sure you are willing to commit to the conditions and responsibilities for participation in the French or German exchange programme, please return a completed language exchange application form (available on the college website) to Mr. Liam McGovern, Transition Year Coordinator, Clongowes Wood College, by Friday May 26<sup>th</sup>

You may decide to make a late application in September, when you have more clarity about your son's plans for TY. It is likely that we will have students in similar circumstances in our partner schools and we will do our best to match suitable candidates up with exchange partners. If this is the case please register your interest in an exchange via email to Mr. Liam McGovern as soon as possible.

Please Note: In submitting an application form you are indicating your approval of your son's candidacy for consideration as a possible participant in the exchange programme and you are accepting the conditions of the different responsibilities that will be undertaken on your and his part. An application for a place on exchange is a commitment to hosting a French or German student provided your son is approved for participation by the selection committee.

### **5.7 Selection Process**

Following receipt of completed application forms the selection of students for possible exchange places will begin. Every effort will be made to do this during the third term of Grammar year. Each applicant will be considered by the Selection Committee (see below) for approval (or otherwise), for participation in the exchange programme. The Selection Committee will recommend to the Headmaster a final list of students who are deemed approved candidates for the exchange programme.

### **5.8 Selection Committee**

This is comprised of the Transition Year Coordinator-Mr. Liam McGovern, Assistant Headmaster- Paul McCormack, German Exchange Coordinator -Ms. Irene O'Rourke, French Exchange Coordinator-Mr. Francis Marron, Lower Line Prefect and Director of Studies- Ms. Helen Hickson

### **5.9 Criteria**

Boys will be considered on their merits in terms of:

- basic ability in the target language.
- general application to studies (in particular the student's diligence mark in HM Reports).
- evidence of maturity for his age.
- taking responsibility for his own actions.
- evidence of reliability to perform in line with expectations.
- good behaviour and worthiness to represent Clongowes and their family and country abroad.
- suitability to the particular school offering the exchange.

### **5.10 Post Acceptance Stage**

- Those students selected will be informed as soon as possible. Mr. Marron and Ms. O'Rourke will contact partner schools in an effort to find suitable exchange partners.
- Following acceptance, you will need to wait for Clongowes to supply each family with the relevant addresses, telephone numbers and additional information. Please note that it may not be possible to do this for all students until well into TY.
- It is advisable, and well worth the effort, to make contact with the exchange family, as soon as possible, even if there are language difficulties in doing this. Should you experience any difficulties with this first contact please contact the appropriate coordinator, Ms. Irene O'Rourke (German) and Mr. Francis Marron (French).
- Normally, when a group are travelling together, one of the Clongowes parents is asked to act as contact person to arrange travel arrangements and the booking of flights, departure/arrival dates and times etc. This has been very helpful in the past.

**If for any reason a Clongowes student decides not to go on exchange, having already made a commitment to an exchange partner, that student and his family must still host the exchange partner for his planned time in Clongowes.**

### **5.11 Requirements for Students Prior to Departure**

Students will before departure:

- complete and submit all coursework consistent with relevant deadlines and the T.Y.P.
- establish with class teachers any coursework requirements to be completed while on exchange.

- honour all commitments to any responsibilities and activities undertaken in the T.Y.
- ensure that all text and reference books are in good order, for use by your exchange partner.
- prepare a class timetable for your exchange partner for the period on exchange. The prepared
- timetable must be clear with each detail matching your own current timetable. Specific names (not option numbers), teacher's names and classroom numbers must be included. These timetables should be returned to the relevant exchange coordinator who will distribute them to their exchange partner on arrival. There is an expectation of students who have accepted an exchange place, to give assistance in the care of other exchange partners before or after their own period of exchange.

### **5.12 Items To Bring With You**

- Cash and Bankcard
- Student I.D. Card
- Passport (organise safe keeping)
- European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)
- An "Irish" present for your exchange family (guideline €25)
- Clothes – time of year dependant
- Formal dress or appropriate dress for formal school/family occasions
- Airports: Check with the airline the conditions for an U16 travelling on their own (if applicable), also if baggage on return journey is overweight, cash for extra charge will be needed.

### **5.13 Report by Host School of Students on Exchange**

Each participating exchange-school will be sent a report form for completion regarding students while on exchange. This is primarily to provide a testimonial from the school that the relevant student has spent a period of time in their country and followed classes and participated in school- life through the medium of a foreign language.

### **5.14 Consideration of Private Arrangements for Leave of Absence**

The College does its best to provide opportunities for as many students as possible to participate in the Exchange Programme. But because no such year exists within the other European Schools' programmes, Clongowes is dependent on the good will of its partner-schools to agree to share in the organisation of exchanges and our numbers are limited accordingly. Where we experience difficulty in identifying sufficient partner-schools, or for exceptional reasons, the College will consider applications for private arrangements. So if parents wish to arrange an exchange/leave of absence for their son and make an application well in advance of their intentions, it may be possible to give permission for the request

provided it does not conflict with the Transition Year Programme and that your son is considered a suitable candidate for exchange (see section 3. above).

An application should be made in writing to the headmaster at the earliest opportunity. Parents will remain responsible for Clongowes fees in all privately arranged leave of absences. There will be no reduction in fees for students who go on exchange or take a leave of absence for part of the year.

Clearly, no arrangements should be made or commitments entered into until permission has been obtained from the Headmaster and arrangements are made with the finance office regarding the payment of fees. We reserve the right to approve or refuse permission for such arrangements. You may appreciate that the absence of too many Clongowes students or the presence of too many foreign students may adversely affect the running of the Transition Year Programme.

Other opportunities such as HOPE trip to Kolkata, exchanges with Riverview College Sydney, Fordham Prep New York etc., may arise and parents will be informed as information becomes available.

## 6. The Duck Push

The Clongowes "Duck Push" has been running since 1993 when a group of Transition Year students from Clongowes decided to do something different to help other young people.

They decided to raise money by pushing a large Duck on wheels across the country, appealing for sponsorship and collecting in the towns and villages along the way.

A number of child focused charities such as Childline have been helped with funds raised during that time but for most of the projects lifetime funds have been directed to Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin.

In recent years a piece of equipment has been purchased for the Hospital after consultation each September and presented by the boys.

So far over €2.2m has been raised since 1993.

While around thirty boys take part in the actual push over eight days from Crumlin to Limerick, the whole year group helps with the annual project, also raising funds through mini companies and collection days.

Boys are involved with every aspect of the organisation of the Duck Push from contacting sponsors to liaising with local media; from running mini companies to contacting host schools such as Cistercian College Roscrea and Glenstal Abbey School along the route.

The project is a way for boys to further live the "men for others" ideal and fosters cooperation and leadership within the year group. We look forward to many more years of Clongowes' Duck Push!