

Coláiste Iognáid
Transition Year Letter
15th August 2020

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I hope you and your families are all well. As a community we experienced a day of greatly contrasting emotions yesterday. Thank God, our prayers were answered, and Ellen and Sara are now recuperating with their families. These types of events give context to the many measures we are putting in place at school level. Ultimately, even though some of the measures are difficult to implement, they are being put in place to protect lives. We must keep this thought to the forefront of our minds over the coming weeks.

The Transition Year Programme is one area of school life which requires adjusting due to current Public Health crisis. We are hopeful that smaller scale class-based trips can still occur. But we are awaiting further guidance from the DES on this. Visiting speakers, Science Projects, Green Schools Environmental programmes and Enterprise plans will all form part of a revised curriculum. Unfortunately, the well-established Social Outreach programme will not proceed in its present form until after Christmas at the earliest.

As a school we have made the decision to place Work Experience on every Friday until Christmas, Work Experience will commence on September 11th and continue every Friday until the 18th December. We are hopeful that if restrictions are lifted, we will be able to recommence a full Social Outreach programme in early 2021, but this is subject to Public Health guidance.


Students need to begin searching for Work Experience sponsors as soon as possible. We will arrange for all students to complete the HSA Covid Return to Work Safely course during the first weeks of term. This should reassure prospective sponsors that students can safely contribute to a workplace in the current environment.

For continuity and to ensure students get the most of their work experience a consistent timetable works best. Students are permitted to be absent from school **on Fridays only** in order to complete their work experience. If some employers are not in a position to take on students every Friday, arrangements may be made through the school to facilitate their requests. Please be aware that weeklong blocks of work experience during the first term, are not ideal, as students will miss out on induction programmes plus other activities and all the new course work covered in daily classes.

Students must inform the school (via the Compass App) and their employer in a case where they are unable to attend their placement on any Friday. A member of school staff will contact every employer sponsoring our students. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that they know the business occupation of the employer and that the work placement obtained is suitable for your son/daughter.

We are aiming to have an online gathering of TY Parents in early September. Hopefully, we will have received more detailed guidance from the DES at that stage and will be able to provide an outline plan for the year's activities.

Best Wishes

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to be "D. O'Sullivan".

David O'Sullivan

Principal

COLÁISTE IOGNÁID



Transition Year Work Experience Guidelines

Coláiste Iognáid

Rationale

Work Experience plays an important role for students in the transition of students from school life to adult working life. Experiencing the world of work, work simulation and work shadowing enhances their personal, social, vocational & educational development. Work experience is an integral aspect of the TY programme.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of TY work experience is to improve students understanding of the world of work and its demands.

- To improve educational standards through using contexts that improve motivation and attainment for all students
- To improve the quality of provision and guidance
- To increase access and choice for all students
- To ensure students follow courses and programmes which are appropriate to their longer term aspirations and needs
- To improve the transition of SEN students from school to adult working life

Benefits of Work Experience

Work placements are most effective if teachers, students, parents and employers see it as an essential and integral part of a pupil's personal development and an opportunity to develop employability skills. Appropriate experiences of the world of work will benefit students, schools and employers.

Advantages of Work Experience for Students:

- Improves pupil's knowledge & employability skills
- Increases pupil's motivation to learn & attain better grades & go to third level
- Gives relevance to the work students do in school especially if the experience is in a related discipline
- Develops links with guidance & consolidates work done in careers & guidance
- Encourages pupil to consider the wide range of jobs available
- Gives pupil an insight into the workings of business and industry
- Highlights the skills, qualifications and experience needed by employers

Advantages for School & Employers:

- Brings the curriculum to life through developing closer links with business and industry
- Creates links with the community & develops a positive image of the school
- Highlights the essential employability skills needed for future
- Employers gain an insight into developments in education and can relate education to the work environment
- Can create an opportunity for seasonal or part time work
- Develops links with guidance & consolidates work done in careers & guidance

Procedure

Transition Year

- Students and parents are informed of the dates for placement.
- Agreement forms and insurance letters are distributed.
- Students must research placements.
- Students approach potential employers and seek placements.
- One must be secured by August before returning to school.
- Agreement forms are returned to the coordinator at TY induction.
- Garda vetting forms are completed if relevant.
- Details of placements are entered by students into the class notebook, in MS Teams
- In TY induction students learn about the behaviour that is expected at work experience
- Placement takes place every Friday for the duration of the Public Health crisis.
- Student take their TY diary to work experience and the employer signs.
- Students show their diary to class tutor in the weekly careers class.
- At the end of the placement the employer completes an evaluation form which is returned to the coordinator
- Coordinator spot checks on work experience by phoning randomly throughout the year
- At the ends of the work experience each week the evaluation forms must be filled and given to the TY coordinator.

Transition Year Work Experience

What is it?

- “Work experience” involves spending time as part of a school course, learning at first-hand about life in a workplace.
- The employer agrees to co-operate with the school in taking on a student for a work experience placement.
- The employer knows that he/she is taking on a person as part of a learning experience,

The student needs to be aware that:

- The placement is part of the school course and offers a great learning opportunity.
- The employer – who has an enterprise to run – is co-operating with the student with limited direct benefit to the enterprise.
- Both employer and student will complete a report at the end of the placement.
- These reports will become important documents for future reference.

Getting the Best from Work Experience:

To get the most from a work experience placement, it is worth thinking in terms of **three** stages. For a student to get maximum benefit, it is important that each stage goes well. The three stages are:

1. **Preparation:**
 - **Searching** for a placement which will suit your interests
 - **Presenting** yourself to the employer and making a good case for yourself
 - **Understanding** what the employer expects from you
2. **Placement:**
 - **Turning up** in good time
 - **Presenting** yourself appropriately
 - **Following** the instructions given by your supervisor
 - **Performing** the given tasks
 - **Getting on** with the other workers
 - **Dealing** with people in a friendly and courteous way
3. **Reflection:**
 - **Thinking** about the placement
 - **Talking** about the placement with your family – and friends, if you wish!
 - **Writing** a report on your placement for the school
 - **Discussing** your work experience in class and with your teachers
 - **Clarifying**, in the light of your placement, your plans for further work experience, for studying and for the future

Garda Vetting

All students wishing to work with children or vulnerable adults need to be garda vetted. Garda vetting can only take place once a student is 16. Therefore, students are unable to do work experience with these groups until they have turned 16. The vetting takes a number of weeks to arrange. Forms are available from the programme coordinator in the school.

Appendix 1: Code of Conduct

TRANSITION YEAR WORK EXPERIENCE

CODE OF CONDUCT

I agree that:

I will attend the workplace on the assigned days and at the times agreed with my employer, subject to a maximum of seven hours per day excluding breaks and lunch time.

I will perform my placement duties to the best of my ability and comply with all reasonable directions of the employer and its employees.

If during the placement I have access to information which is private and confidential, I will not convey to any person outside the organisation any knowledge or information which I have gained as a result of the placement.

I will notify my employer and school (via the Compass App) of any absences e.g. sickness, school activities, etc.

If I am in contact with any member of the public as part of the placement, I will treat them with the highest respect and politeness as I am aware that I am representing the organisation and school at all times during the placement.

I will comply with all Health and Safety regulations.

I recognise that my involvement in work experience is a privilege and as such I have responsibilities to my employer and my school.

Mobile phones must be switched off during my working day and I will not avail of internet access for personal use.

Signature of Student		Date	
Signature of Employer		Date	
Signature of Parent/Guardian		Date	

Appendix 2

Points for students to note

1. Brief yourself on the company/organisation/community in which you're going to be involved.
2. Be aware of the duties you are to undertake.
3. Observe the dress code of the organisation.
4. Show interest at all times during this experience.
5. Bring your TY diary to work experience to be signed each week
6. Be encouraging to all those you encounter, and show empathy.
7. Ask for clarification if you don't understand the task to be undertaken.
8. Don't pass judgement on people or situations.
9. Don't day dream while on task.
10. Make a note of your duties and training schedules.
11. Write down your observations.
12. State whether your experiences in this area encouraged or discouraged you to pursue it as a career.
13. Work on your communication skills.
14. Observe Health and Safety procedures at all times.
15. Evaluate your experience in class notebook on One Note.
16. Last but not least, always be on time!