

Rosemont Transition Year Policy

Developed by: 2009

Due for review: 2013

Scope and rationale of the TY Policy:

Rosemont's TY Policy acts as a guide to the whole school, subject departments and modulated subjects areas (e.g.: Chemistry, Chinese, Law) in developing and promoting the TY programme.

Introduction and relationship with Rosemont's Mission Statement

Rosemont Transition Year Programme is an integral part of our secondary school. Transition Year is compulsory for all students (except in exceptional circumstances). We see this programme as an opportunity for our students to build on the academic achievements and the character development attained in Junior Cert Cycle in order to prepare them for the Leaving Cert and for their future role in society. The Transition Year Programme is carried out in a partnership between parents, teachers and students. Rosemont embraced the TY concept from shortly after its inception in the belief that it was a powerful means to promote the personal development of our students as envisaged in our mission statement. In the years since then we have been consistently impressed by the great and, more importantly, the many small steps in personal self discovery made by our students in the course of their transition year. These steps frequently relate to discovering areas of talent and aptitude in both themselves and each other as a direct consequence of the teaching, learning and life experiences provided by the programme. The response from both students and parents has been consistently enthusiastic and we are grateful for their support and suggestions both in the past and up until today.

Rosemont's Mission Statement

Rosemont challenges: *Ireland's leading teachers inspire students to aim high, set goals, and take ownership of their learning.*

Commitment: A student educated at Rosemont will:

Achieve, while adhering to high academic standards.

Set goals, and **take ownership**.

Have a **greater understanding** of the Catholic faith.

Be **adaptable**, and **initiate positive change**.

Be ready to **lead**, instead of follow.

Use their freedom for the good based on solid moral principles.

Seek out opportunities to **give back** to their community.

Be **interested** in their education and their future.

Possess **people skills** in order to succeed at work.

Be encouraged by an effective **parent-teacher** partnership.

Aims of Transition Year in Rosemont

To help students achieve their personal goals through the activities and opportunities for self reflection provided.

To facilitate academic, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, moral, aesthetic and physical development.

To prepare the students for the world of work, nurturing the skills required as an integral part of a wide variety of subjects

To give them interpersonal skills, especially a respect and empathy for the full cross section of society

To increase their independent learning with a view to each one becoming a participative and responsible citizen

To empower them for decision making processes, especially through creative problem solving

To simulate life situations in order to increase their social competence

To maximise opportunities for students to gain confidence and to learn respect and a willingness to serve family, friends and their wider community.

Introduction to Transition Year for Parents

We invite all the parents of our future TY students to attend an information evening in the 3rd term of each academic year. This is held on the same night as the current TY students

present their end of year achievements to their own parents. The Principal presents the parents with an outline of our transition year programme and answers any questions that the parents may have. The feedback from parents was that they found this process gave them a much greater grasp of the opportunities presented by the TY programme. Further to a staff based evaluation of the process it was suggested that parents would benefit even more from the information evening by also attending the TY presentations. This has now been implemented and is proving very effective. At the end of the presentations tea and coffee are provided to allow parents and students of 4th year to mingle with the 3rd year parents. This greatly facilitates third year parents receiving an informal and spontaneous account of the Transition Year experience. Equally it affords the TY students with yet another opportunity to express how they have personally benefited from the programme.

Special Needs Provision

Rosemont operates a mixed ability policy which is maintained throughout transition year. The TY programme aims to challenge and affirm the full spectrum of abilities of participating students. In some cases this means specific activities targeted at students with particular learning abilities or particular learning needs. In the majority of cases the policy means creating activities within and outside of the classroom which allow a positive and meaningful learning experience for the full ability range. Individual cases which have been identified as requiring special learning support continue to be monitored to ensure ongoing progress for the given situation. Over the years we have been happy to note how many of the modules that students experience in Transition Year prove to be particularly constructive in building self confidence among those with special needs. In particular we have noted that the teamwork involved in social work, adventure sports, the mini company etc have affirmed students who have special needs due to academic, personal or family challenges.

Assessment

In Rosemont assessment is used to maximise the TY Programme. Knowledge of students' progress is a stimulus to improve subject materials and the implementation of their content. A wide variety of assessment is encouraged in order to form a real picture of the effectiveness of the programme for students.

The following methods can be implemented to assess students' growth in overall maturity, skills and academics:

- Presentations to parents, teachers and fellow students
- Dialogues with Year Head and Coaches
- Project Work
- Evaluation of modules
- Exhibition of work
- Written, practical, oral and aural assessments
- Dialogues between parents and Coaches
- Parent Teacher subject meeting
- Written statements by teachers on students' performance
- Feedback from employers, speakers and personnel running field trips
- Personal reflections
- Diaries and journals
- Attainment of certificates
- Study of students' response to speakers, field trips

Certification

Upon completion of TY all participating students receive a special Certification Pack including documentation and confirmation of all the key modules and activities in which they have been involved. In order to highlight and celebrate the importance of each students' achievements, these Packs are presented at the school's annual awards ceremony.

Evaluation of the TY Programme and Policy

In Rosemont the whole school is involved in the evaluation of TY. It is a regularly scheduled item in staff meetings. TY co-ordinator has a key role liaising with core teachers, management, parents and all subject teachers. Students provide a written evaluation of their TY experience at the end of the school year. TY co-ordinator meets with management for an end of TY year audit with a view to planning the new academic year. Rosemont's coaching system ensures a student specific monitoring of the success and effectiveness of the current TY programme. Each subject has an internal review process as outlined in the detailed TY subject plans.

Selected Modules in detail:

Work experience

Aims:

To open up horizons for students in area of career choice

To equip the students with information and experience to improve career choice

To prepare the students for the challenges of work

To discover the students potential in a work environment

To encourage self reflection and self evaluation

To help students reflect on how secondary school prepares them for personal responsibility in the working world through the experience of timetable in school.

To forge links with the parent body

To build links with businesses

To develop personal initiative and responsibility in sourcing work experience

Duration: Two weeks

Subjects: Careers; HE; Business

Compile Curriculum Vitae

Autonomously apply for a work placement

Understanding of the workplace

Introduce topics: co-operation, dependability, ability to follow instructions, initiative, and openness to learning

Prepare employers' expectations and requirements

Evaluation

Work experience: following feedback from the students and parents work experience this year is limited to 2 weeks. Last year students had a third week at the end of May but this did not work. Students found it difficult to find work and were more focused on the summer holidays coming up. They were also tired and the school felt that they were not giving as much as they could to that work experience week.

We evaluate the work experience the week after the students come back so it is important to plan for this when organising the dates for work experience i.e. work experience cannot run into a midterm/holiday.

By having this week we can assess the enthusiasm or not and as a result the success and/or any difficulties the students may have had on the work experience

Transition Year Social Work

Introduction

In Rosemont we have a long history of all students participating in aspects of social work in the local community. During Transition year we strive to build on the foundations which have been laid.

In previous years students have spent a week in the community working in a social capacity. After getting feedback from the centres, students, teachers and parents it was decided to change in how social work is organised. Currently students are timetabled for social work on a Wednesday afternoon from 1.20 – 3.40 each week. The students travel to 5 different centres in the local area and are involved in various activities in each of the centres.

The five centres are: Saint Teresa Alzheimer's Home, Saint Teresa Centre for Adults with Learning Difficulties, The Blackrock Hospice, Saint Marys Home for the Blind and Caritas Condolences Home.

So students can gain the maximum benefit from social work they are using their experiences in the different centres in the Young Social Innovators. The weeks the students are not in the centres they are in school doing research and preparing for the YSI Speak Out and Showcase.

Aims

- To harness the generosity of our young people through allowing them to interact with the needs of the elderly and vulnerable of our community
- Through this experience to nurture a profound respect and appreciation for the individuals they meet and get to know
- To build on links with the local community to the mutual advantage of both the students and the community based projects
- To develop the students' social awareness as a necessary life-long skill
- To develop the students' communication skills with people from a variety of personal situations

- To build students' self esteem and confidence in a setting that is others-centred and challenging
- To encourage self directed learning

Objectives

- Students will keep a diary which they will write in each week about their experiences
- Students will type up a reflection after every four visits on what they have learned.
- Students will be able to set goals for themselves to achieve each week
- Students will be able to evaluate whether they have achieved these goals in their diaries
- Students will be able to work together in teams to achieve individual goals and team goals

Evaluation

This programme is evaluated twice yearly. It will be evaluated in January and May.

On the basis of previous evaluation, centres will be asked to fill out evaluation forms. Teachers involved will also evaluate in January and May and will consider the feedback from student's diaries and reflections. Students will be asked for their feedback.

<p>Exchange with Senara School, Madrid</p>

Duration: February – March

Aims:

To deepen students' love for, and knowledge of Spanish and Spanish culture.

To encourage the students to see Spanish as a living language.

To develop independence and maturity.

To build on life skills and the ability to live abroad.

To deepen self confidence after living away from home.

To encourage an awareness of life outside school and their own homes

To encourage students to become responsible for their own learning and improvement.

To promote flexibility and adaptability in students.

To develop student's communication and social skills.

To foster an interest in further study of Spanish.

Content:

Students will spend several weeks living with a Spanish family in Madrid and attending school in Senara secondary school.

Students will go into separate classes appropriate to their level of Spanish.

Students will fully participate in family life and take part in all family activities.

They will also host a Spanish student who will live with their family prior to, or after their visit to Spain.

Objectives:

Students will greatly improve their skills in Spanish language-both oral and written.

Students will become more independent and mature.

Students will become involved in Spanish culture and way of life.

Students will experience a different way of life.

Students will become fully immersed in the host family and family life.

Students will greatly develop their self-confidence having lived in a foreign country.

Students' communication and problem-solving skills will be deepened.

Selection:

Students must write an essay explaining why they would like to go to Spain and how they feel they will benefit from the exchange.

They must also do an interview with the programme coordinator explaining why they want to go.

Class participation is a factor when choosing candidates.

Spanish language skills and communication skills will also be taken into account in the selection process.

Preparation:

Students must take extra Spanish language classes to prepare them for family life.

They must sign a behaviour contract before leaving for Spain.

Parents must also sign this code of behaviour.

Students must display a willingness to become fully involved in family life and to communicate with their family.

Assessment:

Students will attend classes in Senara and a report will be sent home at the end of their time there.

Senara's programme coordinator will monitor the girls closely while there and will act as coach for them.

Rosemont's programme coordinator will be in regular contact with Senara's coordinator, Maria Alava, by email and telephone with regular updates as to the girl's progress.

Programme coordinator will visit the girls and will evaluate their progress while there.

Evaluation:

Programme coordinator from Rosemont visits the girls and meets with the programme coordinator and evaluates the girls' progress.

Students will self-evaluate while in Spain by means of keeping a daily diary of their time there.

Students do an oral evaluation with Spanish teacher on returning to Ireland.

Organisation of TY

Coordinator Role:

The aim of the TY co-ordinator is to ensure that the year is educationally beneficial, enjoyable, maturing and challenging for the students and that each student will achieve her potential in this year.

The task of the co-ordinator involves the following:

- Overseeing that all events are organised to a high standard and well in advance
- To ensure that parents and students have adequate notice of upcoming events
- To enlist the help, support and ideas of all staff involved in TY
- To evaluate how the year is going regularly with the students
- To attend any courses/meetings relevant to the TY and incorporate where possible ideas and experiences from other teachers
- To keep teachers well informed of any changes in timetables via the Staff notice-board with ample notice
- To enthuse the rest of the staff as to the immense value of TY
- To provide teachers with any TY material already in the school or which may come during the year which would be relevant to the particular teacher
- To tackle any problems which might arise during the year promptly and efficiently so as to diffuse the problem
- To ensure that the TY programme is written up and available
- To evaluate the TY programme each year and ensure that teachers evaluate it
- To keep track of assessment throughout the year – have clear targets from the very beginning of the year i.e.: will it be portfolio, term tests etc.

Evaluation of the task:

Each month, on a designated day, a slot to be provided at the management committee meeting to evaluate how the year is going

At each staff meeting a similar slot will be provided where the co-ordinator can:

1. Express any concerns they might have
2. Inform Staff of upcoming events
3. Enlist ideas or help from other staff members

The rest of the staff will also have the opportunity to voice their opinions on TY at this meeting

The Co-ordinator will meet once per term with the Principal (or more often should the need arise) to evaluate how the term has gone.

Core Team: 2 or 3 teachers with a frequent TY class contact who meet with the TY co-ordinator once per term (or as often as necessary) to discuss the overall progress of the year and to suggest any adjustments.

Subjects and Modules:

English	Irish	Mathematics
Biology	Chemistry	Social work
World Studies	Business	Accounting
Geography	History	Religion (includes RSE)
Physical Education	Spanish	French
Home Economics	Law	Music
Chinese	IT	Current Affairs
Heritage	Sailing	

Calendar

Calendar sent to parents of TY in August and is also available on the school website

Homework Guidelines:

Homework guidelines posted on Rosemont Website www.rosemont.ie

4th Year – Transition year (1.5 hours per night weekdays)

Irish:

Written, Learning, Reading novel

Project work will take place from September to Christmas. This requires 20 minutes twice a week

Novel to be read over the course of the year. This requires ten minutes per week.

Students will also be required to complete written and learning work.

English:

15 minutes three times a week. Learning or reading or written work. An essay every 4 weeks. 20 minutes at the weekend. 1 novel to be read Term 1 & 2.

Maths: Approximately 15 to 20 minutes daily.

History: 15 minutes twice a week. Learning and/or written work. An essay every term. 20 minutes at the weekend. 1 project per term.

Geography: One assignment per week. 10 -15mins. One project per term.

Art: 30 – 40 minutes per drawing

Homework includes 10 observational drawings on a personally selected theme over the course of the year. These are to be submitted at pre-arranged intervals & account for 50% of the end of year examination.

Homework also arises out of project work and includes visual research, drawing & support studies.

Home Economics: 1 double class + 1 single class

double: prep evening before for practical class 10-15 mins

evening of double class (a) evaluation sheet OR (b) finish set work (10 mins)

single: 20 mins per class – learning and/or written. weekend: encourage students to apply skills learned in class at home. E.g.: home baking.

Accounting:

Students are expected to spend 25 minutes a night completing and practising

questions. Practising questions is essential given the nature of accounting

Business 15-20 minutes on questions. 15 minutes learning.

Given the nature of transition year the work assigned will vary; e.g.: projects, research etc. Students will also be involved in the SLSS Young Entrepreneur Scheme during the year. This will involve completing a mini-company proposal, running the company and preparing a final report.

Spanish:

Project to be done at home, due in on the end of week 7 (Oct 19 approx 2007). 1 hour per week.

French: 20 mins per session (2 per week)-reading a novel-Le Petit Prince

Biology

15 minutes. Write up any practical completed on Thursday. Some written work from questions at the end of the chapter. One project for the first and second term. Science in the news – one student per week.

Chemistry

To promote independent learning 6 assignments will be given at regular intervals throughout the year. These must be completed by relevant due date – as per year plan.

World Studies:

Ongoing project work; assigned as required.

Music:

One assignment per week 10-15 mins. One project per term.

Finance:

A Transition Year Fee is added to the main school fees. Recently this fee has been €50. The fee covers almost all activities.

The Law module: usually the cost of this module is covered by sponsorship from a parent working in the field.