



***The Transition Year programme in St. Angela's has been devised for the enrichment of students' learning experiences, with the purpose of laying a solid foundation for the Leaving Certificate programme. Each girl has the opportunity to develop her own skills, talents and to apply them diligently in a process of independent learning.***

***I am happy that the staff of St. Angela's has committed itself totally to this process. I hope that each student will find Transition Year a beneficial experience.***

.....  
***Edel Connolly  
Principal***

# TRANSITION YEAR

## MISSION

To promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of the pupils, and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society.

## Education for MATURITY

with emphasis on social awareness  
and 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 inter-disciplinary  
and self-directed learning.

## **Overall aim of Transition Year in the school**

The central aim of the school is the formation of the human person in respect of her ultimate goal, and the development of her full potential - spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, aesthetically and socially.

### **Aims:**

The Transition Year programme aims

- To help students to integrate their development in each of the above areas – to grow towards maturity.
- To acquire a better knowledge of themselves and of their world by allowing time to reflect, relax and renew themselves in an atmosphere free from the pressure of state examinations.
- To provide a one-year interdisciplinary programme which is broad and flexible, for pupils who have completed their Junior Cycle.
- To deepen their understanding of their Christian calling.
- To lay the foundations for further study in the Senior Cycle and Third Level and life-long learning, with reference to their educational and vocational needs.

### **Programme Evaluation**

The school's Transition Year programme has already been evaluated by two Inspectors from the Department of Education, and by the Regional Coordinator of the Transition Year Support Team on two occasions. In each case the report on the programme was extremely favourable.

The Department of Education undertook a Whole School Evaluation in St. Angela's in 2009. This included some elements of the Transition Year programme. The report may be accessed at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

In our desire to ensure that our TY programme continues to meet our aims, we also invited the former National Coordinator, now based in NUI, Maynooth, to once again review the programme.

The overall Transition Year programme has been reviewed on a national basis on several occasions by bodies such as the NCCA, IBEC and ESRI.

We also ask parents, staff and students to evaluate the programme on a regular basis.

### **Curriculum Content**

*A Transition Year programme is not part of the Leaving Certificate programme* and should not be seen as an opportunity for spending three years rather than two years studying the Leaving Certificate programme.

The programme for Transition Year, *while not absolutely excluding Leaving Certificate material*, should be chosen largely with a view to augmenting the Leaving Certificate experience and laying a solid foundation for Leaving Certificate studies.

Where the Leaving Certificate material is chosen for study, it should be done so on the clear understanding that it is to be explored in an original and stimulating way that is significantly different from the way in which it would have been treated in the two years to Leaving Certificate.

(Extract – Department of Education Guidelines for Transition Year, 1994)

### **Curriculum in Transition Year**

- Individual schools to select and adapt the curricular content, bearing in mind
  - Department of Education Guidelines
  - Pupils' needs
  - Parents' views
  - Possibilities offered by employers
  - Wider interests of the community.
  
- Space to learn, mature and develop without examination pressure.
- Solid foundation for Leaving Certificate programme.
- Better equipped and motivated for Leaving Certificate programme.
- Challenge students in all areas of development.
- Give students an orientation to the world of work.
- Cater for students' personal and social awareness and development.
- Develop basic competencies according to students' needs.
- Develop students' self-confidence.
- Enhance study skills and develop the capacity for self-directed and open learning.
- Inter-disciplinary work to create a unified perspective.
- Extend the learning experience beyond the classroom.
- Provide for work experience / simulation / shadowing.
- Wide range of teaching and learning methodologies.

- Assessment as diagnostic and formative.
- Regular internal review and evaluation.
- Monitoring and evaluation by the Department of Education.

## Assessment

The assessment plan operated by the school is as follows:

- A report will be issued at the end of each ten-week module.
- There will be end-of-year examinations in Irish, English, Mathematics, French and Spanish.
- Continuous assessment will also take place through a variety of methods: written, oral, aural, project, portfolio and work experience report.

## CURRICULUM

### (a) Core Subjects:

Students will take all of these subjects.

Subject	Classes per week
Religious Education and Guidance .....	4
Gaeilge.....	4
English.....	5
History and Geography .....	2/ 2
Current Affairs.....	1
Mathematics.....	5
French.....	4
Physical Education.....	2
Art Appreciation.....	1
Research.....	1
Work Experience.....	2 weeks

**(b) Options**

Select three subjects from each column.

<b>Column A</b>	<b>Column B</b>	<b>Column C</b>
Beginners' Science Physics / Electronics Applied Maths Biology Chemistry Computer Applications ECDL Media Studies Business Studies Philosophy Russian	Film Studies Debating Spanish (Ab Initio) Spanish to LC Enterprise Studies Biology School Garden Project Computer Applications Youth Leadership Accounting ECDL Music(Beginners) Music (Non-Beginners)	Art Craft Art Painting Handcraft Woodwork Cookery Theatre Studies Computer Programming
10 weeks @ 4 cl / wk	10 weeks @ 4 cl / wk	10 weeks @ 3 cl / wk

Learning support will be offered to those who need it.

Spanish (Ab Initio) is taken for the full year (no other selection)

“Continuation” Spanish (to LC) is taken for 1 module (2 other selections)

ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) is taken for module 1 and 2.

**NOTE: In the light of government cutbacks in the funding of Transition Year and the increase in the pupil-teacher ratio, we will need a viable number of students to offer a subject in the options.**

## **SYLLABUS**

### **(a) CORE SUBJECTS**

#### **Gaeilge**

The aim of the course is the development of reading, oral, aural and written skills. The main emphasis is placed on oral and aural skills as well as covering basic grammar. Students are introduced to aspects of Irish culture through debate, dance and drama. Resources such as TG4, Vifax, Foinse and An Dréimire will be used. A student may arrange to attend school in a Gaeltacht.

#### **Religious Education**

The programme in Religious Education aims to give the student a balance between what it means to be an active Christian and an opportunity to study Theology, Social Issues and Human Development.

*Spiritual:* Study of Scripture (Old Testament, the Psalms), Prayer, People of Faith, decision-making and morality. Students attend a retreat in Mount Sion.

*Social:* Project work on moral issues – Peace and Justice, World Hunger, Poverty and other such issues. Visits are organised to Mowlam Nursing Home, St. Patrick's Hospital and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

An introduction to the various topics in the Leaving Certificate Religious Education Programme is also provided.

#### **English**

The aim of the course is to develop the students' appreciation of literature and to improve their writing skills. A modern or classical novel will be studied. Students will be introduced to a selection of poetry and will have the opportunity of reading a play or analysing a film. In preparation for their study of English at Leaving Certificate level students will become familiar with the language of persuasion, information and argument and the aesthetic use of language. As part of their programme students are encouraged to read widely. They may undertake projects in literature or film, or produce a class magazine.

#### **Guidance**

The aim of the Guidance Programme is to develop self-awareness and personal responsibility and to acquire information on careers, the world of work and pathways to higher education.

Topics studied include study skills and motivation, decision making with specific emphasis on subject choice, exploration of careers and courses through project work, psychometric testing of aptitudes and interests, healthy lifestyle, the world of work, preparation for work experience, letters of

application and C.V's. The use of information technology is integral to all of the above.

### **Mathematics**

The course provides preparation for the Leaving Certificate. Remediation is provided for students who have taken Foundation Level at Junior Certificate. Depending on the student's ability and the course followed in J.C., the topics studied include some of the following: the line, complex numbers, the circle, statistics, trigonometry and algebra.

### **French**

Emphasis is on improving oral and aural skills as well as on grammar and writing skills. French civilisation topics such as food, family life, work and travel are also dealt with. Use is made of authentic materials and textbook. An exchange of students and teachers with a school in Bayonne may take place, expanding the possibility for communication with French students.

### **History & Geography**

Students explore a number of the following themes: Environmental Issues, Women in History, Local History, Development Issues, Local Resources and Industry, Field Studies, and a general introduction to the geography of Ireland and world geography. It will also deal with any social or political issues as they arise.

### **Physical Education**

This enables students to sample a wide range of activities that include self-defence, aerobics, badminton, tennis, complementary therapy, soccer and step aerobics. Emphasis is also placed on Health and Fitness Education.

### **Art Appreciation**

Students are introduced to the work of major Irish and European artists. Areas of art such as landscape, still life, portraiture and abstract paintings are studied. Students also study design, appreciation of buildings etc. A visit to an Art Gallery may take place.

## **(c) OPTIONS**

### **Music**

The aims of the Music programme are

- to give an understanding of the basic 'ingredients' of music, viz. beat, harmony, melody etc.
- -to introduce students to types of music to which they might not normally listen, for example Jazz, Traditional/Irish, Classical etc.
- to encourage active listening and discussion on different aspects of popular music.
- singing in unison and in parts.
- To develop musical skills through the use of technology and music software from beginners to advanced levels.

### **Film Studies**

Students are given a brief history of film. Film clips will form an integral part of this section of the course. An in-depth study of two or three films will be undertaken. Film language is taught. As Film is now taught as part of the English course at LC level, this course is an opportunity for students to become familiar with film codes and conventions. They will develop the skills necessary to read and analyse film.

### **Debating**

Students will develop their research, writing, public speaking and debating skills. During this course the students will explore a number of topics and challenge one another in formal and informal debates.

### **Spanish**

Ab Initio Spanish provides a foundation that will enable students to follow the Leaving Certificate course. The main emphasis is on oral and comprehension skills, as well as covering basic grammar rules and tenses in an informal way. Emphasis is on the use of the language in every-day situations, and native Spanish speakers also visit the class. Students will study journalistic articles. This will improve their comprehension skills, their understanding of what's happening in Spain and will in time help them to express themselves.

### **Youth Leadership**

The students will learn speaking and leadership skills that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives. They will be able to overcome the nervousness that everyone feels when asked to speak before an audience. They will learn

to organise and present ideas logically and convincingly, listen to others' ideas, offer helpful advice that will help others improve their speaking and leadership skills. They will also learn to participate in group discussions and meetings.

### **Accounting**

This course is designed for students who wish to study Accounting for the Leaving Certificate. The students will prepare, understand, interpret and analyse financial statements with confidence. Students will develop the ability to appreciate and use financial statements as a means of business communications. They will use analytical techniques to arrive at conclusions from financial information for the purpose of decision-making.

### **Philosophy**

The aim of this course is, through Philosophy, to encourage students to think for themselves, question, reflect and appreciate diversity.

During the module, students will be introduced to the philosophy of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, as well as later and more contemporary thinkers.

Selected, relevant films are shown from which to draw inspiration for discussion and debate.

### **School Garden Project**

This module aims to create different garden features in the school grounds with wildflowers, herbs, hedgerows and a butterfly patch. Here students will study nature and ecology in a natural habitat and learn to identify individual flowers and trees and become familiar with different species. Classes will be a mixture of the practical and theoretical, and will have a strong emphasis on hands-on student based learning.

### **Beginners' Science**

This course is designed for students who have not taken Science to Junior Certificate but who wish to take on a Science subject to Leaving Certificate. Students will learn basic laboratory skills through experimentation e.g. separation techniques, making crystals, acids and bases, heat, electricity etc. The body systems and local ecology are studied.

### **Physics**

This involves theory, practical and project work, with emphasis on topics that have everyday relevance. Project work may involve building mousetrap cars, solar boats etc. Experimental work on such topics as light, sound, motion, electricity etc. are carried out using traditional laboratory skills and more

modern computer data logging methods. Topics such as Radioactivity and current research e.g. CERN are also studied.

### **Chemistry**

Emphasis is on practical skills and the ability to carry out instructions through doing laboratory experiments. The main study areas dealt with are Atomic Structure, Chemical Reactions, Factors affecting rates of reaction, Water, Volumetric Analysis and Chromatography. It also involves an introduction to balancing chemical equations and calculations.

### **Biology**

This course varies from module to module. As some of the topics are extensions of Junior Certificate biology, this course is both theoretical and experimental and may include studies of the human body, the origins of life and evolution, plant and animal life and areas within the forensic sciences.

### **Electronics**

This module focuses on some of the basic steps in developing electronic circuits. It will include background theory on components and circuits, computer simulation and the assembly of simple circuits. It will also include information on careers in electronics and related industries.]

### **Russian**

This provides an introduction to the Russian language and culture. Students should be able to conduct basic conversations, count, read and translate international words from Russian into English. Emphasis will also be placed on aural skills. The course is funded by The Marino Institute of Education, Dublin.

### **Business Studies**

The course consists of elements of Business and Economics. Students will be introduced to fundamental economic and business terms. An understanding of the structures, institutions, processes and management of business will be outlined. It will enable students to use established commercial principles and knowledge, to critically evaluate commercial information, and to offer solutions to given commercial problems. It will develop a critical understanding of the overall environment in which business functions.

## **Computer Programming**

We begin our Computer Programming module by teaching Scratch. This is a programming language developed by MIT that makes it easy to create interactive stories, animations, games, music, and art – and share creations on the web.

As young people create and share Scratch projects, they learn important mathematical and computational ideas, while also learning to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively.

Later in the module students will be introduced to other programming languages and possibly app development.

## **Computer Applications**

The course deals with the basic terminology used in computers and an introduction to computer software. Students learn to use computer applications like Word Processing, Spreadsheets, PowerPoint, Publisher, Databases and file management.

## **The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)**

A student who wishes to take the **ECDL** course must pay a fee of €200 approximately. This entitles her to a CD of all the course material and sitting the test in each module. 70 hours is the recommended time to complete the course. Students will be expected to do the majority of the course work from their disc at home. It is a very onerous course but worth it when the student has achieved her ECDL certificate.

THE European Computer Driving is an international certificate that verifies competence in computer use, making the holder readily mobile within Ireland and internationally.

The ECDL syllabus covers basic computer skills and use of common applications in the workplace, the home and in society in general. It is divided into seven modules, six practical and one theoretical. A test in each module must be passed before the ECDL is awarded.

*The ECDL modules are as follows:*

Module 1 Basic Concepts of Information Technology

Module 2 Using a Computer and Managing Files

Module 3 Word Processing

Module 4 Spreadsheets

Module 5 Databases

Module 6 Presentation

Module 7 Information and Communication

The tests in these modules do not have to be taken in any specific order. When a candidate registers on an ECDL programme, they receive a Skills Card on which their progress through the seven tests is recorded. When all seven modules are completed, the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) is awarded.

### **Enterprise Studies**

This course facilitates the transition from school to adult life by simulating the real business world in school. It covers the complete life of a company, dealing with shares, finance, market research, advertising, production, quality control, management and meetings.

### **Media Studies**

The course is conducted with a strong practical emphasis, using the radio and TV studios in the school. Magazine production, using Microsoft Publishing and digital photographic software, is explored in a multimedia context.

### **Applied Maths**

Applied maths is for those who like solving problems through the medium of mathematics, who have a taste for physics, and who like to work things out for themselves. Applied maths is for life – every job requires problem solving and analytical skills.

### **Art Painting**

Students are introduced to various types of fine art and graphic design during this module. A project is set on the first week and each student is encouraged to explore and express herself through 2D art work. Some of the different areas of study are Portraiture, Still Life, Imaginative Composition, Abstract Painting and Poster Design. Each student has the opportunity to examine different media in art e.g. paint, chalk, oil pastels, colouring pencils, charcoal and collage.

### **Art Craft**

Students are introduced to the main craft areas including Lino Printing, Hat Making, Calligraphy, Mosaic, Puppetry, Pottery and Batik. One of the above crafts is studied in detail during the module. Students are encouraged to collect images to influence that work through personal research. Each student normally produces one piece of detailed Craft Work.

## **Theatre Studies**

The course includes some history of theatre from earliest times including exploration of rituals. Drama games are enacted to build group and individual confidence. Basic warm-up exercises, movement and text work are explored. Following the reading of a one-act play, there is discussion on the setting, action, context and characters. There is input in workshop format from theatre professionals, e.g. on set design, directing etc. The structure is flexible in order to meet the needs of each group and to accommodate the possibility of some element of performance linked to other modules. In so far as practicable the pupils attend live theatrical performances e.g. drama, dance.

## **Woodwork**

This module enables students to become familiar with the use of both hand tools and electric tools. Students produce a finished product, chosen from a large list, bearing in mind that they are limited in their experience of working with wood.

## **Cookery**

This is a practical programme where students cook a different dish each week, following a demonstration by the teacher: e.g. starters, pastry, fish, meat, salads etc. Hygiene, nutrition and budgeting are also dealt with.

## **Handcraft**

This course provides an introduction to Craft as a leisure activity. It includes guidelines for choosing a craft, as well as selection and purchase of materials. Students complete at least one item from a list of crafts that includes patchwork, cross-stitch, embroidery, knitting, and crochet.

## **Other information relevant to Transition Year**

### **Work Experience**

A two-week work experience programme is planned after the second . **The places are organized by the school.** Each student is placed with a local employer in a work area that would, where possible, be a student's choice. Every effort is made to link it to career experience rather than just work experience. This may help them with their subject choice in Fifth Year. Students keep a written report each day and the employer provides an assessment report. Students do not receive payment and their period in the workplace is covered by school insurance.

## **Special Events/ Workshops**

Department of Education and Science guidelines recommend that visiting speakers and seminars, as well as study visits and field trips, form part of a Transition Year programme. Poets, playwrights, environmental activists, politicians, local historians, development workers and doctors are among those who have addressed the students. Students visit other schools, local hospitals, do urban fieldwork, visit local factories, art galleries etc. Some of the workshops include:

Creative Writing	Matrix Thinking	Film Workshop
Reiki	Percussion Workshop	Legal Studies Course
Dragon's Den	Junior Achievement	Céilí Dancing
Garda Road Safety	Garda Drug Awareness	Irish Workshop

## **Main Project**

The guidelines recommend that the student take personal responsibility for her learning. With this in mind, each student must produce a major unit of work on any topic of her choice by mid-March. Each student has to learn to research material, meet deadlines, and develop objectivity as well as presentation skills. She also needs to know her topic in depth in order to make an oral presentation to the class on completion of the project.

## **Overseas Trips**

The school hopes to participate in a two-week student and teacher exchange programme with a school in Bayonne. It is confined to twenty students who would go to France in October. The French students return during the following spring. In each case the student stays with her respective host family.

For twenty three years a five-day trip to Manchester has taken place. This has proved to be the most popular trip in Transition Year and should take place again next year.

As these trips are expensive for parents, we recommend that students start saving money immediately.

## **Other Trips**

A group also travels to a musical in Thurles. Students may also travel to career exhibitions / open days in Dublin. They also have a number of half-day

trips, such as visits to the library, Kennedy Park, Treasures of Waterford, urban trails and guided walks.

### **An Ghaeltacht**

A student may spend time attending school and living in a Gaeltacht community. The student normally arranges this.

### **Overseas Study**

Students may arrange to study in a European school for part of their Transition Year. The student arranges this and costs are borne by the student. If it is organised on an exchange basis, then the foreign student is welcome to study in St. Angela's during her visit to Ireland.

### **Gaisce**

This is the President's Award scheme for young people who undertake voluntary activities from four categories: Community Involvement, Personal Skill, Sporting Achievement and Venture Activity. It is entirely voluntary but all Fourth Year students are encouraged to participate in the scheme. The requirement in each section is about 13 hours spread over a 3-6 month period. It is non-competitive and students who reach the goals they set themselves will receive the Bronze Award, consisting of lapel pin, medallion and certificate. The students may then continue to take the silver award in Fifth Year and aim for gold at a later stage.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

Transition Year provides an opportunity for students to accept responsibility in a number of areas, e.g. working in the tuck shop, with responsibility for sales and finance; working on one of the catering committees or organising rooms for parent-teacher meetings. Students also run clubs such as the Equestrian Club and the Modern Dance Club.

Students who have skills help in training teams and in organising games for First Years. Students also have the ideal opportunity to return to participation in the various sports, having opted out after Second Year.

As part of the GAISCE/ the President's Prize students visit the patients in local hospitals. Indeed they find it so rewarding that many girls continue to do this work long after Transition Year.

Membership of the Senior Choir, School Orchestra and Traditional Group are all available to Transition Year students.

Students also involve themselves in fundraising and also decide on how money raised is distributed.

Students are encouraged to involve themselves in clubs and societies outside the school, such as Youth Clubs, Sports' Organisations, Drama etc. They are also encouraged to take courses such as First Aid & Life Saving.

As a guide, the following are some of the courses / activities undertaken by T.Y. students in St. Angela's.

- Disability Awareness Programme.
- Junior Achievement Programme.
- One World Development Project.
- Graffiti Drama and Workshop.
- Know Racism Project.
- Sign Language Classes.
- Beauty Therapy Course.
- Film Workshop.
- Legal Studies Workshop.
- European Youth Parliament Conference.
- Gaisce.
- Swimming / Horticulture with St. Martin's School.
- MATRIX Thinking Workshop.
- Build A Bank Challenge.
- SLAM – Poetry Workshop.
- Dance Workshop.
- Presentation Skills Workshop.
- RNLI Presentation.
- C.P.R.
- Céilí.
- Reiki Workshop.
- Television Production Workshop – “as Gaeilge.”
- G.A.A. Coaching Course.
- Waterford City Fire Brigade.
- Garda Síochána Road Safety Presentation.
- Garda Síochána Drug and Substance Awareness Programme

### **Certification**

Guidelines from the department of Education state that the Transition Year programme should be certified locally. Students are therefore presented with a folder at the end-of-year Graduation ceremony.

The general certificate of completion is graded (Distinction / Credit / Pass / Completion) to maintain its integrity. The folder will also contain any other certificates earned by the student, e.g. Gaisce, Fund-raising, Faith Friends, Sign Language, Community Work, Work Experience etc.

## **Provisional Dates for Transition Year 2017- 2018**

Module 1 ends                      November 17th

Module 2 ends                      February 9th

Module 3 ends                      May 29th

End of Year Tests begin        May 25th (p.m.)

Graduation Ceremony:        May 29th

Work Experience:                February 19th – March 2nd

Manchester Trip:                March 23rd - 27th