

# Transition Year 2023

## First Term Newsletter



## Dingle, Burren, Tara, Ventry and Wicklow

This year we welcomed 120 students to Transition Year, our biggest cohort ever. Our five classes have been kept very busy throughout term one, from fundraising for GOAL and the Irish Hospice Foundation to our bonding trip to River Shannon Adventure Centre. Students have had a very positive start to their Transition Year. Thank you to the tutors involved with our students, Mr.Geraghty, Ms.Manning, Ms.Eracleous, Ms.Brennan and Mr.Gibson. The tutors work alongside the students throughout the year and are an invaluable asset to the programme. A big thank you and best wishes to Ms.Clune for all her organising at the start of the year. We are also delighted to welcome Ms.McKeown to the TY team as our Programme Coordinator. A big thank you to Mr.Ward, Ms.Gibson and Mr.Burke who help support the TY programme throughout the year.

Students have been experiencing a wide variety of subjects, some being taught for the first time. Students have been learning Chinese, honing their photography skills, learning about politics and society, delving deeper into their mind with the science of wellbeing, learning how to restore furniture, becoming active citizens in Development Education and Environmental Studies, among many more! For some, these subjects have come to the end of their 6-week cycle, but for others, they are only just beginning. Our exciting programme this year offers students a taster of a wide array of subjects. A big thank you to students for being so receptive to learning new things and to our TY teachers for developing new courses.

*N. Denny*  
Year Head

*L. McKeown*  
Programme Coordinator



### Charity Work

So far our TY students have helped raise over €2139.65 for charities GOAL and the Blackrock Hospice. More on this below.

### Maths Week

Well done to our TY students who worked alongside the maths department to organise a fun table quiz for 1st year students.

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### Junior Cycle

**Success** After months of waiting, our TY students received their Junior Cycle results. The college is extremely proud of the fantastic results.

## TY Bonding Walk

In our first week of school, all five classes headed off on a mammoth walk from the school to the Bohernabreena Reservoir! A 16km round trip, students had the chance to get to know one another and socialise outside of their class group. The sun shone down on us for the day and it was a wonderful way to start our year. A big thank you to the tutors, Noeleen, our SENCO Ms.Elliott and their previous year head, Mr.Finucane for accompanying us. It was a lovely way to break the ice at the start of the year.

## Ploughing Championship

It was that time of year again, our annual trip to the Ploughing Championship. This year our cohort of 120 headed for the fields of Laois in mid-September. Our groups travelled over two days, with one group getting all the luck in the weather department! Students got to experience farm life and see some of the animals and equipment that they have been learning about in Agricultural Science. It was a great two days and students were brilliant ambassadors for our school during the trip. A special thank you to Mr.Rooney who has been giving our students an insight into real farm life!

## Work Experience

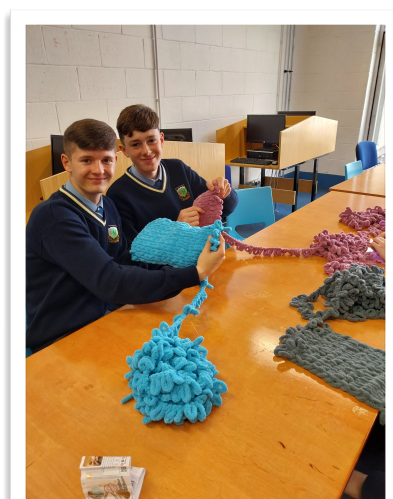
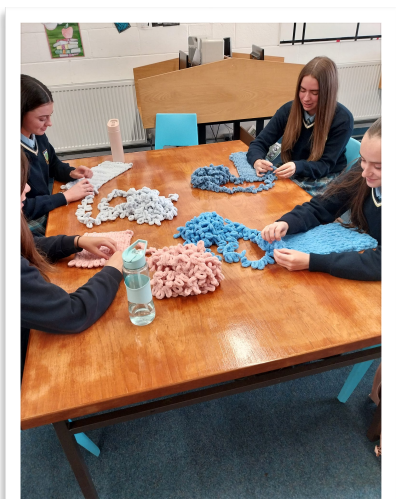
Students have now completed their first term of work experience and have developed insights into a range of different industries from teaching to the Gardaí to working with animals. There are lots of volunteer options available to students also. Information can be found on their notice board in base area G as well as their Teams page.

## Nutrition Workshop

Our students attended a nutrition workshop with Nutritionist Paula Duggan in October. Students learned about the importance of having a balanced diet, what they need in order to fuel their body and their brain, alongside how to fuel themselves adequately for sports. A really worthwhile workshop for students and staff alike.

## Knitting Without Needles

Our TY classes have had some lovely Tuesday mornings spent knitting without needles. Each week, our TY classes have taken part in a 2-hour workshop where they learn a new skill, and get to take home a cosy snood. With one more class to go after the break, it is safe to say this workshop has been a hit! A big thank you to Caroline from all of TY.



## **Mini Company**

Class Dingle were the first group to experience 'Mini-Company' this term and decided to organise a Halloween themed bake sale as their business event. Under the guidance of Ms.O.Brennan, students planned, organised and facilitated a bake sale for 1st year students. The TY students then had to manage their finances to calculate if they made a profit or not. The good news is...they did! Well done to all involved.

## **Community Care**

Ms.Dingle has been busy teaching our community care module this year. Over a 6 week period, our students have the opportunity to engage in conversations related to how we can contribute to our communities in a meaningful way, how to be more caring to others and the importance of being an empathetic person.

Ms.Dingle has been busy ensuring our link with Cheeverstown remains, as this has become an important part of our school culture within the wider community.

## **Bake Sale for Blackrock Hospice**

Our five classes worked in their tutor groups to raise money for Blackrock Hospice, in memory of our Deputy Principal, Noel Donnelly, who sadly passed away at the start of this academic year. Our TY students once again were fantastic as they baked up a storm and sold their treats to the entire school. Over a 12 minute morning break, a staggering €1107 was raised. We added this sum to funds raised by staff at our coffee morning for hospice last month and are delighted to say that a donation of €1772 was made to Blackrock Hospice from the school. Being part of a caring community is a value we strive to promote in our students, and their involvement in this worthy cause highlights the amazing students we are so lucky to have. A sincere, heartfelt thank you to all students and their parents/guardians.

## **Scoil Eoin**

Some of our TYs have had the opportunity to work with Scoil Eoin on Armagh Road, a school for students with special educational needs. Our TYs assisted Scoil Eoin and local club St.Judes on their 'GAA Inclusion' event for students with additional needs. TY students who volunteered will now be engaging in a paired reading scheme with the students of Scoil Eoin following the midterm break. Well done to all TYs involved in this worthy initiative.

## **GOAL Jersey Day**

Well done to class Wicklow and Mr.Hanafin who successfully ran our annual 'Jersey Day' in aid of GOAL charity. Students helped raise an amazing €1032.65. Charity is an important part of our TY programme and we are really proud of the students for getting involved.

## **Art and Italian Trip**

Two of our TY classes had the opportunity to visit the National Gallery with Ms.Cappello and Ms.Dingle. A lovely day out was had by all, as they experienced pieces of Italian art and enjoyed a day in the city centre. Students were excellent ambassadors for the school.

## Bonding Trip - by Pierce Delaney (4 Dingle)

At the end of the month of September, we Transition Year students went on a bonding trip all the way to Roscommon. Unfortunately, due to us having such a big year group, the trip had to be split up into two groups. Classes Ventry and Tara were scheduled to go from the 25th to the 27th of September, whilst Dingle, Wicklow and Burren were lined up for the 27th to the 29th.

Tension was high when a storm was revealed to be on its way, posing a big problem us students who were meant to be sleeping in tents and participating in outdoor activities all day long. The first group had to be taken home after a single night, and the second group's trip was under threat of not even happening. Thanks to all the hard work from the teachers and adventure centre hosts, the second group also got to go for a single night. The adventure centre was set on us bonding, and to help that all phones were taken away upon arrival. This isolation proved to be a great incentive to properly bond with other students, and many were very glad for the break from technology.

All students were encouraged to participate in all activities. We started with a climbing wall, learning how to properly secure our own harnesses, then tackling the wall itself. With difficulties ranging from easy to hard, the wall had a path for everyone to try at their own pace. We finished up our climbing session with races, a good competitive way of supporting each other. Next up was archery, where we formed teams and after a couple of practice shots, began shooting with a shared hope of hitting that bullseye.

We then moved onto the mudslide, which is a highlight for many students. As seemingly Irish as it gets, this section featured a long slippery slide into a huge pool of mucky water. Despite how it sounds, the simplicity, speed and care free sensation of this slide lead to it being immensely popular and definitely making a memory that will last. From here, we went kayaking, in either one or two person kayaks. Some people participated in challenges, for example rowing across the entire length of the water-space we were using while standing, whilst others were content just relaxing in their boat. Less fortunate students found themselves being plunged into the water, with a capsized kayak, faced with the task of flipping their boat and hauling themselves back inside. Following kayaking was pier jumping, which was very enjoyable from the get-go, however the cold was starting to get to most and some exhaustion was felt after such a full day.

After a quick shower and change of clothes, we were shown our tents and evening activities commenced. We headed back out to the archery area for a competition, where the earlier training finally paid off as teams of roughly 6 heads a group battled in a knockout event for the best score. We then moved to the garden connecting to the main dining/lounge area, where we learned how to start a fire with flint and steel. After some practice, everyone made their own flame. Toasting of smores commenced, and some people enjoying their golden brown marshmallows while others had to cope with a blackened attempt of their treat. That evening had lots of chatting and good times, before we all retreated to our tents.

The food and site were both brilliant, with the centre even interviewing the group to find out what our favourite parts were, and open to suggestions to provide the best experience they possibly can. With all of this being so much fun and also counting as the Gaisce's required trip for the bronze medal, it was truly an amazing experience and will definitely be a core memory of our 4<sup>th</sup> year in St.MacDaras.



**A big thank you to all parents/guardians for your support to our TY programme.**

**Have a safe and pleasant mid-term!**