

BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

TY PLAN 2023-2024

Blackwater Community School Mission Statement

All of us at Blackwater Community School are committed to Quality Education.

Mission Aims of Blackwater Community School

- To foster the Christian values of truth, honesty and integrity
- To enable students to develop their academic, physical, emotional and spiritual potential to the fullest extent.
- To create a safe environment where students and staff feel cherished, secure and happy.
- To give students access to a broad and balanced education.
- To equip students with a strong sense of self-belief and self-motivation.
- To create a caring, co-operative and friendly community in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- To enhance student's sense of their role within the local and wider community.
- To provide a welcoming atmosphere for parents and the wider community.

OVERALL AIMS OF TRANSITION YEAR: CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

The following aims are interrelated and interdependent and are reflected in the school programme.

1. Education for maturity with the emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
2. The promotion of general, technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
3. Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Enhance self-esteem through personal development
- ❖ Develop new skills
- ❖ Improve social competencies
- ❖ Extend learning beyond the classroom
- ❖ Linking the school with the local community
- ❖ Develop multiple intelligences
- ❖ Promote enterprise and initiative
- ❖ More informed choices through subject sampling
- ❖ Improve interpersonal relationships
- ❖ Catch up with remediation and compensation in various subjects.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

TY lends itself to all sorts of exciting and innovative teaching methods. All staff should, at some point in time, teach TY to ensure whole staff involvement. Successful teaching strategies used in TY can be introduced more successfully in mainstream teaching. This will lead to enhanced and enriched teaching experience for everyone. Our strategies bear in mind our increased focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills at BCS.

Repertoire of Strategies

- Oral presentations by students linked to our literacy objectives
- Field trips and study visits
- Drama in educational exercises and role play
- Group work/pair work
- Negotiated learning
- Classroom discussion and interaction linked to our Literacy Programme
- Task based learning
- Visiting speakers/ workshops
- Interviews
- Project work
- Practical work

Teachers using these new teaching methods, can make learning an environment of excitement and magic.

MAIN CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Induction Day for TY students (Cycling the Greenway)
- Pilgrimage to Ardmore
- Play on Mental Health with follow up Workshops.
- Mini Company Workshop
- Ploughing Championship
- Junk Kouture Workshop
- Careers Exhibition Cork
- Ice Skating Cork
- Annual Christmas Market : Mini Company
- Carol Singing (visit to St. Carthage's Home)
- BCS Goes Dancing
- RCSI Mini Med Programme (selection based on candidates applications results)
- Car Safety and Road Awareness Programme
- Eurofins Transition Year Science Essay Competition
- Ger Carey Standup Comedy Tour for Transition Year
- Work Experience (each student will undertake two placements over the year)
Week one: November 13th -17th 2023.
Week two: March 11th – 15th 2024
- Gaisce Mountain Hike
- First Aid Course: Emergency First Aid Health Care Ireland
- Visit to the SGT Dungarvan
- GAA Future Leaders Programme
- River Rowers Project (Cappoquin Rowing Club and Waterford Sports Partnership)
- An Gaisce(ongoing over the year)
- Hope Foundation
- John Paul ii Award(ongoing over the year)
- Wellbeing Talk / Safe Socialising Talk / Road Safety Talk
- Portfolio Interviews (see Appendix)
- Cairde Interviews
- 3-day Trip to Achill Outdoor Activity Centre
- Annual Transition Year Graduation Night

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

Third Year classes are visited at the end of January by the TY Coordinator for the purpose of informing students about the programme and affording them the opportunity to ask questions. An information night for parents and students, presented by the coordinator and with the presence of the principal/deputy principal and the TY Year Head, takes place shortly afterwards. Following this, application forms are distributed and are required back usually within two weeks. This is to facilitate overall planning for senior cycle and to ascertain approximate numbers going into TY and Fifth Year.

Previously, short interviews took place for all students but due to current numbers, we only interview where there is a perceived need, notably for students with a poor discipline record or students who have been flagged to us by other teachers. The latter may be for a variety of reasons including poor attendance, lack of motivation etc.

UPTAKE

At the moment the vast majority of students avail of the Transition Year Programme offered in our school. The current Year group is made up of 162 students divided into eight class groups.

TY INDUCTION

An Induction Day takes place on the first day of term. Students are allocated their class, and a general overview of what is planned for the year. Students are given their timetables and time is allocated to explaining the modules to students.

Students then have an activity day in their new base classes to give them the opportunity to get to know the students within the class.

This year students were divided into eight classes with TY A,B,C,D cycling the Waterford Greenway on Tuesday and TY D,E,F,G cycling the Greenway on Thursday.

DIVISION OF CLASSES

A few key factors impinge on the division into class groups:

- Modern European language classes are blocked. Because of large numbers, students studying French and German need to be distributed evenly across the A/B/C and D/E/F groupings in the timetable as do those students who have not studied a modern European language to Junior Certificate. These latter students currently study either Introductory/Conversational Spanish or Italian in TY.
- All students study Science in TY so any students who have not done so to Junior Certificate are spread as evenly as possible across the six classes.
- Students availing of learning support are usually extracted from Irish so we try to group them together in one or more classes, depending on numbers, to facilitate this.
- We try to achieve a gender balance across the class groups.
- If certain students have proved bad combinations in previous years then we try to separate them into different class groups.
- Generally, we try to ensure that each student has at least one friend in the class group but parents and students are advised that this may not happen and that learning to cope in new student groupings is part of the learning process associated with TY.

TIMETABLING

The timetable is reviewed annually. This may happen at a staff meeting or more usually through consultation by the TY Coordinator with individual staff members. This information is then discussed with the DP in charge of timetabling and the Principal, if necessary and changes are implemented where possible. One small example is how we have increased the number of mini company classes this year. In previous years it had two classes per week, but this was found to be less than ideal.

TABULAR BREAKDOWN OF THE NUMBER OF CLASSES PER WEEK PER SUBJECT

	No. of classes
ENGLISH	3
IRISH	3
MATHS	3
ICDL	3
SCIENCE	2
BUSINESS	2
FRENCH/GERMAN	3
PE	2
HOME EC.	2
HISTORY	2
GEOGRAPHY	2
CAREER GUIDANCE	2
MUSIC	1
MODULES	9
RELIGION	1
Total	29

Modules 23/24

Year Long Modules include:

Mini-Company, GAA Future Leaders, Media Studies, Music/Drama and Art

Rotating Modules include:

7/8 Weeks of the following:

Computer Aided Design, Dance, Road Safety, Music, Bookkeeping, Community Care, Sign Language, Self Defence.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment in Transition Year is in keeping with the overall school policy on assessment. There is an emphasis on both assessment for learning and on assessment of learning within the programme.

Assessment is conducted within each subject by the subject teacher. Each student maintains a Portfolio of Achievements into which he/she places certificates of achievement, completed projects, assignments, reports on modules/subjects/trips/visiting speakers, work experience evaluations and community service updates. A variety of models of assessment are chosen to complement the variety of approaches used in implementing the programme.

- Homework is a regular feature of all courses in Transition Year. It forms part of the process of assessment for learning, and can count towards the student's final assessment.
- Individual teachers using a variety of modes including continuous assessment, written, practical, oral and aural assessment, assess student performance and assessment of learning in each course.
- Project work is an important feature of the assessment process in the programme. Project work and project deadlines are staggered throughout the year. Individual teachers outline the assessment criteria for his/her students. Copies are made available to the TY students.
- Student diaries/logs and portfolios are also part of the assessment process in some courses. Efforts to facilitate student participation in the assessment procedure are undertaken in some courses through the use of the student diary/log. Students are also encouraged to self assess at different times of the year.
- The employer assesses each student's work experience.
- Summative assessment of student performance in Transition Year takes the form of four yearly TY reports to parents/guardians.

CERTIFICATION

- Students are awarded certification in many courses accredited internally by individual teachers and externally by outside agencies (Eg ICDL, Gaisce, First Aid, John Paul ii Award)
- The school awards various certificate of participation for involvement in and completion of various modules.
- Teachers award their grade in student reports according to the following criteria: attendance, participation and assessment.
- All students who successfully complete the Transition Year are presented with a folder of certification.
- Blackwater Community School Transition Year Awards.
Student achievements are rewarded in all area at the end of year Graduation Ceremony.

Evaluation

- Students evaluate the Transition Year Programme at the end of the school year by doing a digital reflective assesment.
- Informal on going evaluation of modules and courses occur in the form of consultation between students and Coordinator .
- Ongoing evaluation by teachers and between teachers and their students is also encouraged. Staff evaluation meetings are facilitated by the Coordinator towards the end of the year.
- Parents are invited annually to evaluate the programme.
- Informal on going evaluation of modules and courses occur in the form of consultation and discussion between staff members and Coordinator. Issues are highlighted and discussed and necessary changes are introduced to improve the programme based on information received
- Major reviews of the programme have taken place involving all staff members over the years