



25th September 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope this letter finds you and your families well.

We are working with Transition Year students in their weekly Careers & Guidance classes to prepare for their first work experience placement which takes place **Monday 19th October – Friday 23rd October 2020**, as communicated at the beginning of the summer holidays.

We appreciate that these placements may be difficult to source and may even take a different form/planning due to the impact that Covid-19 places on how we live and work.

A key component of the Transition Year programme is the opportunity to participate in a work experience or voluntary work placement. The experience gained on a placement is not only an invaluable insight into working life but also provides an avenue for students to gain credits as part of their Transition Year programme. The placement can potentially assist them in planning for their Leaving Certificate and future career paths. The objectives of work and voluntary experiences include affording students an opportunity to experience life in a professional work-place setting and to strengthen their personal, communication, social and organisation skills.

The recommendation from the Department of Education in the '**Returning to School Transition Year 2020-21**', July 2020, document is:

***“Block release:** In cases where it is possible for students to safely complete their work experience in accordance with public health advice and social distancing requirements, they should do so. Where it is not possible for all or some students to do so during the block(s), they should attend timetabled classes as normal during the designated weeks.”*

Therefore we are encouraging students to secure work placements as planned with their parents/guardians permission. Alternatively, students who are unsuccessful in securing one should attend school **Monday 19th October – Friday 23rd October 2020**. A Transition Year timetable will be in place, in keeping with the Department of Education guideline above. All students will be able to receive the designated work experience credits that week for full attendance, participation, engagement and positive behaviour.

In preparation for work-placement during this time, students will complete the Healthy and Safety Authority course in Return to Work Safely (COVID-19) Induction to better understand the 'Return to Work Safely' (RTWS) protocol requirements for returning to work.

Please find a new updated host employers pack available with an additional 'Return to Work Safely' (RTWS) document:

- a **Host Employers guidance leaflet**,
- a copy of **State Indemnity Confirmation Statement** (Community schools are State indemnified which extends to cover work placements, employers should confirm it is appropriate with their insurer).
- a **'Work Placement Summary' form** (*which must be completed & signed by student, parent/guardian and host before it is returned to the school*)
(*The contact name and number will be used by the school to check-in with you during the time of placement, the form will then be stored by in the student's file in the School Office*)



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- ****a 'Return to Work Safely Statement'** (which must be completed & signed by student, parent/guardian and host before it is returned to the school).

In keeping with 'Return to Work Safely' (RTWS) protocol requirements, we ask that parent/guardians confirm that all students will:

- be provided with any additional information, advice and training on COVID-19 measures in your workplace.
- be provided with an outline of your COVID-19 Response Plan.
- be informed of the points of contact for addressing COVID-related matters during work.

Students who are successful in sourcing a placement are asked to return the completed and signed **Work Placement Summary' form** and **Return to Work Safely Statement** to their Careers & Guidance teacher (Paul or Deirdre) by **Monday 12th October**.

Following our safe return to school for all year groups, on a full-time basis, we will now introduce activities and excursions to enhance student learning and experience of the Transition Year programme. Trips to events, workshops and excursions may involve individual class groups and increased costs due to private transport. Activities may be more expensive due to reduced group size. All of these considerations are being kept to the forefront of planning for this academic year and ensuring we adhere to government guidelines. We make the Covid-19 plans that businesses and facilitators have in place available to you via the school website.

With consideration given to the points outlined above, the fee will remain €400 but monies collected will be reviewed as the year progresses whether planned trips, activities and excursions take place – which may result in a return of monies at the end of the academic year. The fee payment can be accessed through VsWare payments as "TY 2020/21" and can be paid in instalments.

Students have received an outline of the year during classes this past fortnight and will be updated on the allocation of credits and assessments next week.

We are working to publish a revised outline of the entire programme on our school website in October and we will inform you when this link is available.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Míle buíochas,

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