

My Child My Vision



- SECOND EDITION -



➤ HSCL Parent Transfer Programme

A programme to empower parents to guide their child through the school transfer process and to support their child's progression in education.

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↘ Disclaimer: The Home School Community Liaison Parent Transfer Programme was first published by the Limerick City and County HSCL coordinators in 2011. The contents of this revised programme are provided as an instructive guide only. They are intended to enhance public access to information about the HSCL Parent Transfer Programme. While every effort is made in preparing material for publication, no responsibility is accepted by or on behalf of the Limerick City and County HSCL coordinators for any errors, omissions or misleading statements on these pages.

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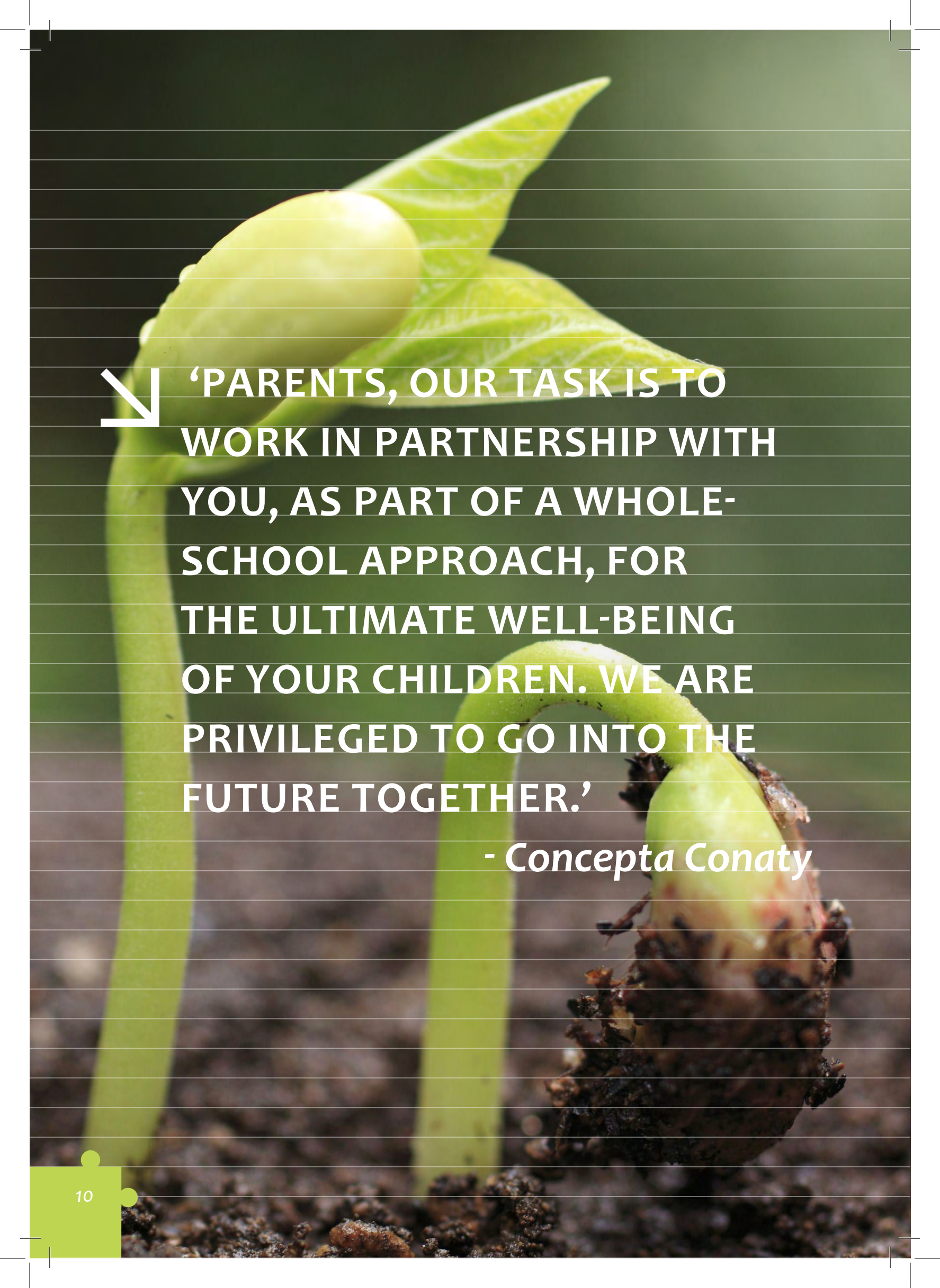
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Dedicated to:
Dr. Concepta
Conaty
(HSCL
National Co-
ordinator
1990-2009),
through whose
visionary and
dedicated
work the
Home School
Community
Liaison
scheme was
established.



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↙ **‘PARENTS, OUR TASK IS TO
WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
YOU, AS PART OF A WHOLE-
SCHOOL APPROACH, FOR
THE ULTIMATE WELL-BEING
OF YOUR CHILDREN. WE ARE
PRIVILEGED TO GO INTO THE
FUTURE TOGETHER.’**

- Concepta Conaty

Acknowledgements

→ We would like to thank most sincerely the parents who undertook the parent facilitation training course and who work in partnership with Home School Community Liaison coordinators. Parents' commitment to the programme has been inspirational.

→ We would like to acknowledge all the Limerick HSCL coordinators whose dedicated and committed work made this project possible.

→ Our special thanks to our gifted trainer and facilitator, Margaret Griffin, who assisted in developing and delivering the programme. Margaret was unstintingly generous with her time and her expertise.

→ Our thanks to the School Principals for their support. They encouraged coordinators' engagement with the programme, facilitated the time commitment involved and provided venues for our meetings.

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→ Our thanks to Maria Tobin, Integrated Services Manager, Tusla Educational Welfare Services, for her encouragement and for her commitment to the Home, School, Community Liaison Scheme.



**‘MANY THINGS CAN WAIT, THE
CHILD CANNOT.**

**RIGHT NOW HIS BONES ARE
BEING FORMED,**

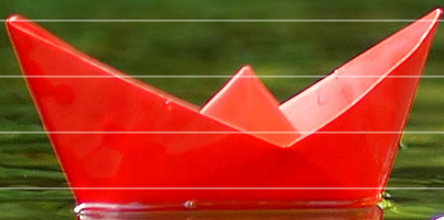
HIS BLOOD IS BEING MADE,

**HIS SENSES ARE BEING
DEVELOPED.**

**TO HIM WE CANNOT SAY
TOMORROW.**

HIS NAME IS TODAY.’

- Bernard van Leer Foundation



Foreword

This manual is the follow-up publication to 'My Child My Vision', the very successful transition programme which was developed by Limerick parents and HSCL coordinators in 2011. Almost eight years ago this highly committed team embarked on an ambitious project, to highlight to other parents the opportunities presented to their children, through successful progression through education. They also set out to increase parents understanding of the current Post-Primary School curriculum, structure and supports. An enormous level of commitment and hard work was required, by way of the design and the subsequent continuous facilitation of the programme across Limerick city. Countless parents and their children have benefited from having engaged in the facilitated workshops and now the time has come to build on this success, update the programme in line with new developments in education, and pass the gauntlet on to a new wave of Parents and HSCL Coordinators.

Once again Limerick parents and HSCL coordinators have risen to the challenge and have produced this practical and valuable resource. In tandem with the redesign of the manual, twenty parents have undertaken intensive training in facilitation skills in order that, going forward, they can co-facilitate the workshops with the HSCL Coordinators. The determination and commitment demonstrated by all has been truly inspirational.

The strength of this programme by way of impact and sustainability has, I believe, been due to the fact that parents themselves have been involved in all stages of design, training and delivery in the schools. Who better to understand the concerns of other parents, around their child's transition to Post-Primary School, and the support needed at this very important time in a child's education. Motivated by their desire to do the best for their children and likewise to empower other parents, these new parent champions stepped up to the challenge laid down by the HSCL Coordinators by wholeheartedly committing to this endeavour.

The Home School Community Liaison Scheme promotes at its very centre the importance of partnership between homes, schools and communities. It would be remiss of me if I did not give due credit to the incredible group of HSCL Coordinators whose dedication to the families they work with was the driving force for this project and who provided ongoing encouragement and support to our new parent facilitators. The successful fruition of this project is in no small measure due to the outstanding work that these Coordinators do in building and sustaining positive relationships with parents and to the strong partnership that is being built between home, school and community. On behalf of those involved I offer this programme for dissemination to schools nationally in the hope that it will be of assistance to HSCL Coordinators, parents, students, teachers and communities across the country.

Maria Tobin

Integrated Services Manager, Tusla Educational Welfare Services.

↙ 'EDUCATION IS NOT THE
FILLING OF A PAIL, BUT THE
LIGHTING OF A FIRE.'

- *William Butler Yeats*



➤ Introduction:

Background

One of the objectives of the HSCL Scheme is;

to raise awareness in parents of their own capacities to enhance their child's educational progress and to assist them in developing relevant skills.

The Limerick HSCL coordinators identified the need to support parents through the difficult phase of transfer from primary school to post-primary school. It was acknowledged by the group that much work is being done in supporting parents once the child moves to post-primary school and that there are a range of resources available as a reference guide for the parents. However through consultation with parents on an individual basis, and through parent focus group discussions, the Limerick HSCL coordinators identified the need for more in-depth work with parents in this area particularly at primary level. Many parents have expressed a desire to talk about how they feel about the move, to get more information on the options open to their child, to understand the system and to start the process when their child is in 5th class as opposed to 6th class or 1st year. The following are some comments expressed at a parent group meeting in relation to transfer:

- 'As a parent I need to be informed of the whole process myself. Explain the process to me please'
- 'It's frightening for us as parents to see our child not coping'
- 'I need a place to express my fears for my child where he can't hear me'
- 'When making school choices and getting all the literature it needs to be explained to us e.g. We do not know what C.S.P.E. is etc.'

As a result, the Limerick Home School Community Liaison coordinators have, in consultation with parents, designed an in-depth Transfer Programme for the parents of children transferring from primary to post-primary school in the Limerick area. This Transfer Programme was updated in 2017 and again in 2018 for national use. It is proposed that this Transfer Programme will start in 5th class, continue through 6th class and be completed in 1st year. Again, comments from the parents' focus group meeting directed this:

- 'The foundation for my children is crucial - it has to start in 5th class for secondary school.'
- '6th class is too late. Too much going on - confirmation, entrance exams etc.'



**‘THE BEST SCHOOLS HAVE
BUILT TRUE PARTNERSHIPS
WITH PARENTS.’**

- *Stoll and Fink*



↘ *The Programme:*

Programme Aims

The aims of the Transfer Programme are:

1. ↘

To empower parents to make an informed decision about their child's transfer from primary school to post-primary school.

2. ↘

To help parents feel more confident and comfortable about the transfer process.

3. ↘

To increase parents' aspirations for their child's future so as to enhance their child's participation in the education process, and to ensure their retention in Post-Primary School and to encourage their progression to 3rd level education.

Transfer Programme Objectives

AT THE END OF THE PROGRAMME PARENTS WILL:

1. Recognise that they are real stakeholders in their child's education.
2. Have explored any fears or concerns in relation to their child's transfer from primary school to post-primary school.
3. Have identified their needs in terms of supporting their child through the transfer from primary school to post-primary school.
4. Understand the application process for post-primary school.
5. Have sufficient knowledge about each school that will enable them to choose wisely.
6. Have the confidence to fill out the application forms.
7. Have successfully gone through the application process having discussed and understood all relevant information.
8. Have a positive attitude to his/her role in the transfer process for his/her child from primary to post-primary level.
9. Understand the importance of full attendance for the learning process.
10. Understand the value of Post-Leaving Cert education in terms of employment and their children reaching their full potential.
11. Have a sense of ownership and involvement with their child's new school.
12. Have learned about the structure of post-primary education and have the confidence to engage with management/teachers and support staff in their child's new school.
13. Know what to expect at an open night. Know what information to ascertain and what questions to ask.
14. Be aware of the options and supports available to them and their children in second level.
15. Have a broad knowledge of the education system in Ireland.
16. Be empowered as partners in their child's education and have confidence in accessing the school system.

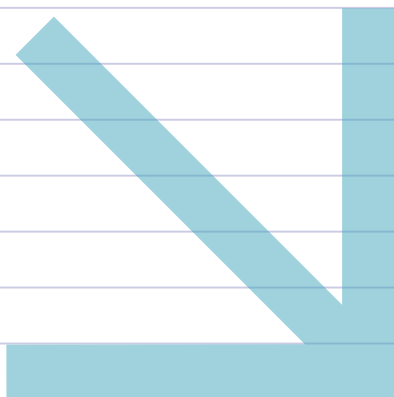
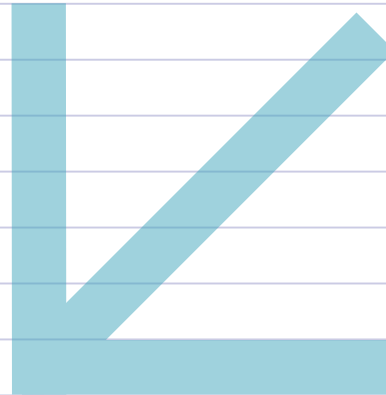
Handout 1:1 Transfer Programme Outline

➤ The Transfer Programme will be delivered over 3 years in the following way:

5TH CLASS:	When?	Session:	Content:
	End of Term 2 or Start of Term 3 (Term length varies with Easter)	Session 1:	Introductions, a round, hopes and expectations for the programme. Understanding the education system in Ireland. Fears and concerns in relation to my child's transfer to post-primary school. Explanation of the next session: visit to 3 rd Level.
	Middle of Term 3	Session 2:	Visit to a 3 rd Level Institution: e.g. Institute of Technology, Maynooth University, UCD, NUIG, Limerick School of Art and Design etc. Remove the mystique which often surrounds 3 rd Level, Encourage parents to see 3 rd Level as an option for their children. Outline specific supports available post entry.
6TH CLASS:	When?	Session:	Content:
	Early September	Session 3:	Introductions, a round. Understanding the Education System in Ireland. Knowledge of local Post-Primary Schools (PPS). Budgeting for PPS, Understanding the importance of attendance.
	November	Session 4:	Introductions, a round, understanding how to apply to a post-primary school. Costs associated with PPS. Introducing & completing school application form. Accepting places.
	March - April	Session 5:	Introductions, A Round, understanding the structure of your child's new school. Discuss subjects available in Post-Primary Schools. Reading a class timetable. Understanding the jargon of Post-Primary Schools.
1ST YEAR:	When?	Session:	Content:
	Term 1: Early September	Session 6:	Introductions, a round, hopes and expectations for the Transfer Programme. Understanding the Education System in Ireland. Aspirations for my child's future. Fears and concerns in relation to my child in PPS. Post-primary school structures.
	Term 2: Post Autumn 'mid-term'	Session 7:	Introductions, a round, understanding the post-primary education system. My legal responsibility as a parent in relation to my child's education. Getting the most from parent teacher meetings. Evaluation of the Transfer Programme.

Transfer Programme Design

The HSCL Transfer Programme emerged from the need for parents to be given the support to explore and debate the issues arising for them in relation to their child's transfer from primary school to post-primary school. As a result the HSCL Transfer Programme is designed to facilitate interactive sessions as opposed to simply providing information. This has implications not only for the way in which the programme is delivered but also for those who are to deliver the programme.



The inclusion of a facilitative approach to working with parents in the Transfer Programme requires a slower pace and more skill on the part of the programme facilitators. Familiarity with basic Facilitation and Group work processes and skills is essential for all those involved, in addition to knowledge of the Transfer Programme materials. As a result all those involved in the delivery of the HSCL Transfer Programme have received training in both areas.

Parents as Facilitators of the Transfer Programme



‘Parents need to come into the primary schools and help other parents with this stuff’ - [recorded at ‘parent-focus group’ meeting]

Parents believe parents should be involved in the delivery of any Transfer Programme to other parents. In addition, the training of parents as facilitators to work in partnership with the school in the delivery of the Transfer Programme is in keeping with the ethos of the HSCL scheme. HSCL clearly identifies parents as a resource to other parents and works on the premise that parent-to-parent is an effective means of communication. HSCL Co-ordinators believe that enabling parents to take on such roles as facilitators empowers the parents and gives them a sense of ownership in the education process.

Co-facilitation of the Transfer Programme by the HSCL coordinator and a parent is seen as the best approach. As a result, the up-skilling of parents to become equal partners in the delivery of the HSCL Transfer Programme was identified as central to the success of the Programme. This partnership will further develop the bonds between home, school and community and have positive outcomes on retention rates. Parents underwent training in a number of key areas as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ➤ Understanding groups | ➤ Boundaries and confidentiality |
| ➤ Building trust in groups | ➤ Giving and receiving feedback |
| ➤ Group contracts | ➤ Communication skills |
| ➤ Exploring and understanding experiences of groups | ➤ Confidence building |
| ➤ Roles people play in groups | ➤ The Transfer Programme content |
| ➤ Introduction to group dynamics | ➤ The Transfer Programme materials |
| ➤ Planning a group session | ➤ Co-facilitating the Transfer Programme |
| ➤ The role of the group leader | ➤ Facilitation Skills |

Methodology

➤ **A variety of methods are used in the sessions in the Transfer Programme. These are outlined below, along with some other methods that may be used in the delivery of the programme.**

➤ **The Round:**

The Round is a very structured activity where the facilitator invites each member to comment in turn, moving around the group members in an orderly fashion. Members are discouraged from joining in until their turn. This method is used at the beginning and at the end of a session.

➤ **Energisers:**

These are quick games or exercises that help to re-energise the group if participants' attention begins to wane. There are many good reference books and websites available with a range of energisers for facilitators to use.

➤ **Large Group discussion:**

This method allows all the members of the group to explore an issue or topic together and discuss information that may have been introduced to the programme or points that have

been raised during the session. The facilitator must manage this process to enable all members have their say and to ensure one or two members do not control the discussion.

↘ **Small Group discussion:**

Small Group discussion provides an opportunity for participants to explore a topic or question with a small number of people. This helps quieter members of the group to put their views to the group and changes the energy of the group. A representative from each small group is asked to feed back the main points to the large group.

↘ **Brainstorm:**

This method is used to get the group to focus quickly on a topic and to gather participants' first impressions on a topic. Comments and suggestions are not discussed but recorded quickly on the flip chart.

↘ **Presentation:**

This is an opportunity for the facilitator to present material to the group, a process that reinforces the learning. Overheads, PowerPoint, pre-prepared flip-charts and hand-outs may be used.

↘ **Working in pairs:**

This enables two people to explore an issue together, to analyse their own experiences of a topic and to bring their findings back to the main group. Ensure that participants do not always work with the same person. A comment like: *'finding somebody you have not had a chance to talk to will encourage participants to work with new people'*.

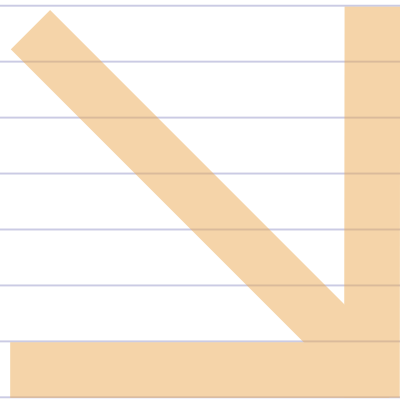
Using this training manual



This manual comprises of seven sessions delivered over three school years. The first five sessions are delivered in primary school and the final two sessions in post-primary school. Each session builds on the knowledge gained in the previous sessions. However, the programme allows for the possibility that some parents in the post-primary school sessions may not have attended the primary school sessions.

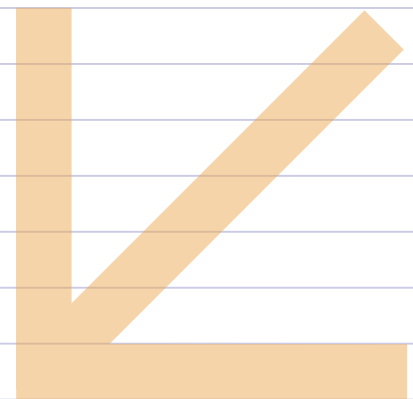
Each part of each session is allocated a time. This is a guide only. The time element will depend on a number of factors including group size, group experience, timekeeping etc.





The optimum group size for the Transfer Programme is 12 – 14 parents. This allows for the level of sharing and interaction required. This programme is about encouraging dialogue with parents and about affording parents the time and space to explore the issues, concerns and topics.

The format of this manual facilitates the inclusion of material relevant to the users' own school circumstances and requirements. Information particular to each individual school can be introduced as required.



The programme suggests a range of methods and exercises throughout the seven sessions. However, alternative exercises and activities may be used, in place of those described to illustrate the topics and information.



‘NOT EVERYTHING THAT
COUNTS CAN BE COUNTED.
AND NOT EVERYTHING THAT
CAN BE COUNTED, COUNTS.’
- *Albert Einstein*

Session Plan 1:

Fears and concerns about transfers

Timing: 5th Class - Term 3

Time allocation: 1.5 hours

Rationale for this Session:

The initial session is all about getting to know what the programme is about, who is running it, who are the other parents attending and most importantly, to gain an understanding of the education system in Ireland.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to begin the process of enabling parents to explore the issues affecting them in relation to their child's transfer from primary to post-primary school.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will:

1. Know what the Programme will cover.
2. Know what is expected of them in terms of participating in the Programme.
3. Have identified their needs in terms of their child's transfer from primary to post-primary school.
4. Will have explored any fears or concerns they have in relation to their child's transfer from primary to post-primary school.
5. Have a broad knowledge of the education system in Ireland.
6. Recognise that they are key stakeholders in their child's education.

SESSION PLAN 1: *Fears and concerns about transfers*

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
5min	Introduction and Registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↘ The facilitators introduce themselves and welcome everyone to the Programme briefly putting the Programme in context. ↘ Participants sign the registration form. 		Registration Form.
15min	Hopes and Expectations for the Transfer Programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↘ The lead facilitator invites participants to introduce themselves and say why they want to participate in the Programme. ↘ The second facilitator writes up participants' needs and expectations on the flipchart. ↘ The facilitators hand out the proposed Programme content, highlighting that this is the first of five sessions to be attended while their child is in primary school. ↘ Facilitators confirm whether people are happy with the content and ensure participants make the connection between their individual needs and the Programme content. 	The Round.	Flip Chart and Pens. Handout 1:1 <i>Transfer Programme Structure.</i>
15min	Ground Rules/Group Contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↘ The facilitator asks the participants to identify the ground rules that will help them to participate fully in the Programme - rules that will allow the group to work together as a group effectively e.g. Children First, ↘ Confidentiality ↘ It is okay to ask questions and say you don't understand. ↘ We will listen to one another ↘ Mobile phones on silent ↘ Have Fun! 	Large Group Discussion. Notes on Chart.	Flip Chart and Pens.
15min	BREAK		

15min	<p>Understanding the education system in Ireland:</p> <p>↘ The facilitator asks the group what they know about the education system in Ireland, asking prompt questions such as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the different subject levels and options available to your child? 2. Why do some people go to third level and some people do not? 3. What is the cost of going to third level? <p>↘ The facilitator puts up the diagram of the Structure of the Education System and distributes hand-out of same.</p> <p>↘ The facilitator encourages the group members to explore their understanding of this system and where their child fits into it and could fit into it if they successfully completed post-primary school.</p>	<p>Brainstorm.</p> <p>Whole Group Discussion.</p>	<p>Flip Chart.</p> <p>Diagram of the Education System.</p>
15min	<p>Fears/Concerns in relation to my child's transfer from primary to post-primary:</p> <p>↘ Split the group into small groups of four to discuss participants' concerns in relation to their child moving from primary to post-primary school.</p> <p>↘ After 5-7 mins take feedback from the groups, writing the list of concerns on the flip chart.</p> <p>↘ Facilitate an open discussion about concerns.</p> <p>↘ Highlight the fact that all parents have some fears and concerns and they are not alone.</p> <p>↘ Highlight the fact that this Programme will address many of their fears and concerns.</p>	<p>Small Group Discussion.</p> <p>Whole Group Discussion.</p>	<p>Handout 1:2 Structure of Education System.</p> <p>Flip Chart and Pens.</p>
10min	<p>Evaluation and Close:</p> <p>↘ The facilitator conducts the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you feel at the end of this first session? 2. What was your learning from this session? <p>↘ Round & Explain trip to 3rd Level Institution.</p>		

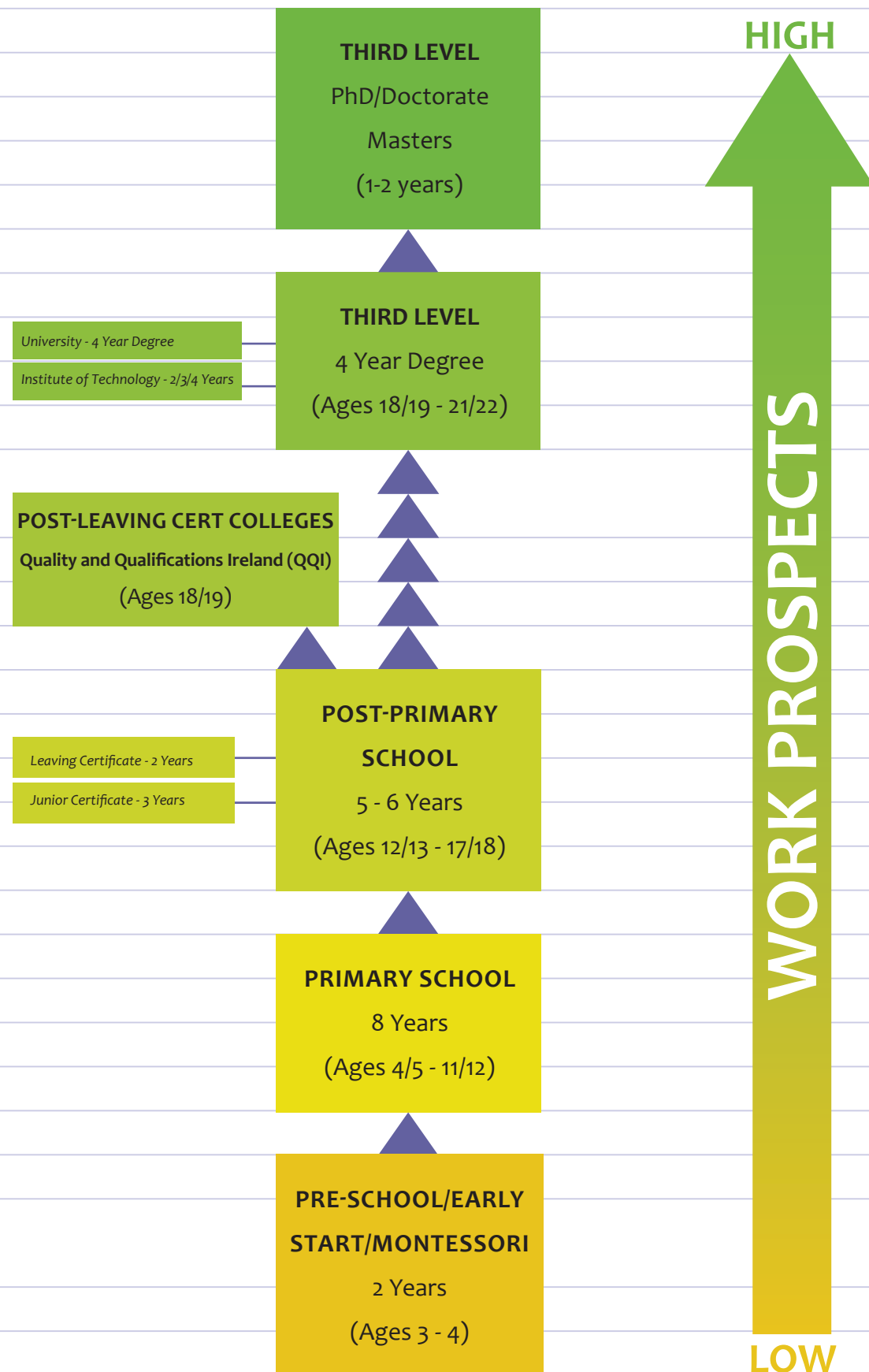
Handout 1:1 Transfer Programme Outline

5 TH CLASS:	When?	Session:	Content:	
	End of Term 2 or Start of Term 3 (Term length varies with Easter)	Session 1:	Introductions, a round, hopes and expectations for the programme. Understanding the education system in Ireland. Fears and concerns in relation to my child's transfer to post-primary school. Explanation of the next session: visit to 3 rd Level.	
	Middle of Term 3	Session 2:	Visit to a 3 rd Level Institution: e.g. Institute of Technology, Maynooth University, UCD, NUIG, Limerick School of Art and Design etc. Remove the mystique which often surrounds 3 rd Level. Encourage parents to see 3 rd Level as an option for their children. Outline specific supports available post entry.	

6 TH CLASS:	When?	Session:	Content:	
	Early September	Session 3:	Introductions, a round, understanding the Education System in Ireland. Knowledge of Local Post-Primary Schools (PPS). Costs	Schools (PPS). Costs associated with PPS, Understanding the importance of attendance.
	November	Session 4:	Introductions, a round. Understanding how to apply to a post-primary school. Costs	associated with PPS Introducing & completing school application form. Accepting places.
	March - April	Session 5:	Introductions, a round, understanding the structure of your child's new school. Discuss subjects available in	Post-Primary Schools. Reading a class timetable. Understanding the jargon of Post-Primary Schools.

1 ST YEAR:	When?	Session:	Content:	
	Term 1: Early September	Session 6:	Introductions, a round, hopes and expectations for the Transfer Programme. Understanding the Education System	in Ireland. Aspirations for my child's future. Fears and concerns in relation to my child in PPS. Post-primary school structures.
	Term 2: Post Autumn 'mid-term'	Session 7:	Introductions, a round, understanding the post-primary education system. My legal responsibility as a parent in relation	to my child's education. Getting the most from parent teacher meetings. Evaluation of the Transfer Programme.

Handout 1:2 Structure of the Education System in Ireland





**‘THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF
EDUCATION IS TO TURN
MIRRORS INTO WINDOWS.’**

- Sydney J. Harris



Session Plan 2:

Visit to Third Level Institutions

Timing: 5th Class - Term 3

Time allocation: 3 hours

Rationale for this Session:

The second session is bringing the parents to visit 3rd Level Institutions to gain first-hand experience, knowledge and familiarity of a range of 3rd level institutions in a particular region. HSCL Coordinators can contact the Access Officer/ relevant 3rd Level contact to organise the visit and to answer parents' questions, as well as provide information.

As a result of their visit parents will be enabled to have informed discussions with their child around third level options.

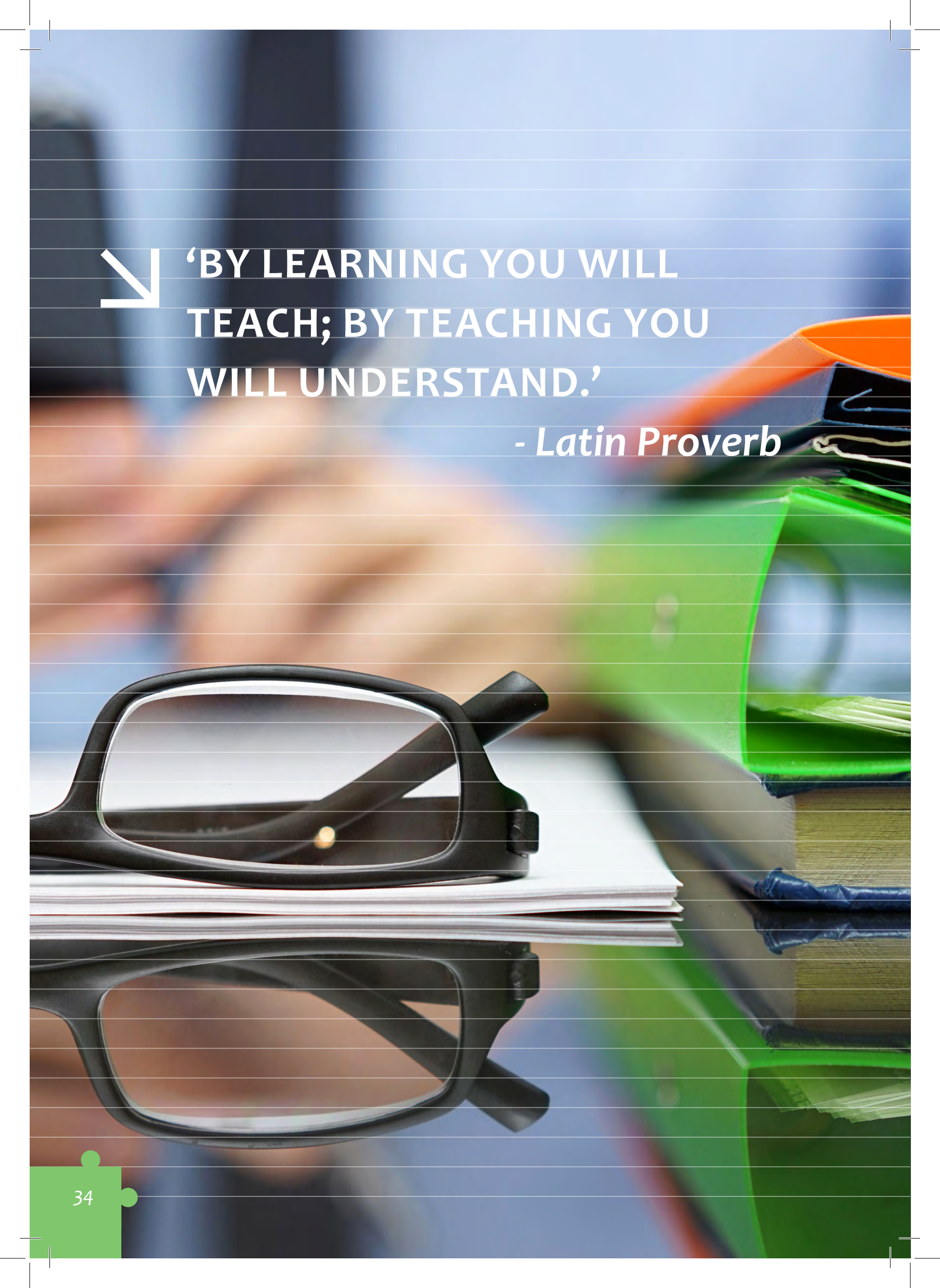
Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to empower parents to see third level as a realistic option for their child.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will have:

1. Explored the options of a range of 3rd level institutions in a particular region.
2. Had a guided tour of a 3rd Level Institute.
3. Attended an orientation session to give an introduction to the college.
4. Been made aware of the range of courses on offer within the college.
5. Been made aware of the options and supports available to their child.
6. Heard about extra access supports, for example scholarships, SUSI grants etc.
7. Understood career prospects arising from the completion of the course(s).



↙ **‘BY LEARNING YOU WILL
TEACH; BY TEACHING YOU
WILL UNDERSTAND.’**

- Latin Proverb

Session Plan 3:

Preparation for Open Nights

Timing: 6th Class - Term 1

Time allocation: 2 hours

Rationale for this Session:

The third session is to prepare the parents for the upcoming season of open nights and encourage them to visit as many open nights as possible.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is for as many parents as possible to attend one or more open nights and to get the most out of it for their child.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will:

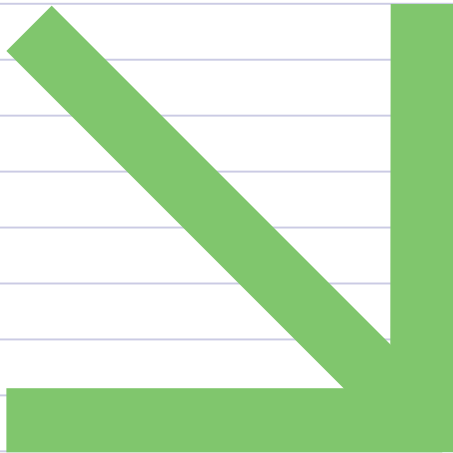
1. Understand the Education System in Ireland.
2. Have a schedule for the upcoming open nights.
3. Know what to expect at an open night.
4. Know which information to gather and what questions to ask.
5. Know what local post-primary schools are in the area.
6. Be reassured parents that application forms will be dealt with in Session Four.

SESSION PLAN 3: Preparation for Open Nights

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
20min	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome participants and remind them that this is the third of a series of seven sessions aimed at helping them through their child's transfer from Primary to post-primary school. ➤ Invite participants to reintroduce themselves to the group and say what they recall most from the last session. ➤ Outline the agenda for the day's session. Explain the aim of this session which is to empower parents to make informed choices in relation to the post-primary school they choose for their child and also to prepare them to complete the application process. ➤ Display the ground rules discussed in the first session reminding members that these rules still apply and asking for any comments or concerns about the ground rules. 	<p>Round.</p> <p>Large group discussion.</p>	<p>Agenda for this session on the flip chart.</p> <p>Notes from previous session.</p>
25min	<p>Issues affecting your choice of post-primary school for your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Display the fears and concerns recorded in the first session and invite members to discuss any new concerns that may have arisen. ➤ Display the <i>Structure of the Education System</i> shown in the first session and allow members to comment. ➤ Pin the flip charts on the wall for the duration of the session. ➤ Break the group into small groups of 3 or 4 to look at the following question: What do you need to consider when deciding what post-primary school is best for your child? ➤ Bring the groups back together and tease out the responses. ➤ Be prepared for concerns to arise on issues such as the Junior Cycle, Senior Cycle and subject choices. 	<p>Small Group Discussion.</p> <p>Large Group Discussion.</p>	<p>Flip Chart: Handout 1:2</p> <p><i>The Structure of the Education System</i> (used in Session 1).</p>

15min	BREAK <i>During the break the facilitator must prepare the room for the next section of the session</i>		
25min	Understanding Open Nights: ➤ Explain (to the group) the reason for the open nights. Cover topics such as; dates, venues and what to do if you cannot attend the open night etc. ➤ Ask the group to brainstorm possible questions parents might like to ask at the open night. The second facilitator will write the questions on the flip chart and get them typed and distributed by the end of the session (co-facilitator).	Brainstorm.	Flip Chart and Pens.
25min	Knowing your local post-primary schools: ➤ Display information about the post-primary schools in the area around the room. ➤ Remind participants that it is important that they are aware of the post-primary school curriculum, the supports and options available in each school and the costs associated with them. ➤ Distribute Jargon Buster: - <i>Understanding the language of Post-Primary School</i> . ➤ Encourage parents to move around the room looking at the information available and then invite them to sit in small groups to discuss each display. ➤ Invite questions and comment, encourage movement and discussion.	Workshop.	Copies of prospectus and any promotional material for all post-primary schools in the area. Handout: 3:1 <i>Jargon Buster.</i> Handout: 3:2 <i>List of Local Post-Primary Schools.</i>
10min	Evaluation and Close: ➤ The facilitator conducts the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn: 1. <i>How do you feel at the end of this first session?</i> 2. <i>What was your learning from this session?</i>	Round.	Handout: 3:3 <i>Costs of Attending Post-Primary School.</i>

Handout 3:1 Jargon Buster



➤ JUNIOR CYCLE:

This period of time covers the first three years of post-primary school – First Year, Second Year and Third Year.

At the end of this cycle, pupils will have completed the Junior Cycle Student Award.

➤ J.C.S.P:

The Junior Certificate School Programme. The JCSP is aimed at students at risk of early school leaving but has also been found useful in addressing other educational needs.

The programme offers schools and teachers a flexible approach to teaching and learning in the context of the junior cycle curriculum.

➤ T.Y:

Transition Year – Fourth Year. Pupils have the chance to sample many different subjects, to do voluntary work and to gain work experience.

➤ SENIOR CYCLE:

This period of time covers the time pupils spend in school after the Junior Certificate – Transition Year (*optional*), Fifth Year and Sixth Year. At the end of this cycle, pupils sit the Leaving Certificate examination.

➤ L.C.A:

This is the Leaving Certificate Applied, an alternative to the regular Leaving Certificate. Pupils spend two years studying this course and at the end of the two years, they sit the Leaving Certificate Applied examination.

➤ L.C.V.P:

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme – an extra module for the Leaving Certificate, including a project and work experience. Pupils can gain up to 60 points and many pupils take it as an extra subject.

➤ **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION:**

The amount of money that a school asks each family to contribute voluntarily to the running costs of the school.

➤ **PROSPECTUS:**

Brochure/booklet explaining all aspects of a school.

➤ **CURRICULUM:**

The set of courses that a pupil has to study for the JCSA (*Junior Cycle Student Award*) and Leaving Certificate exams.

➤ **SYLLABUS:**

An outline of the programme of study for each subject.

➤ **ASSEMBLY:**

A gathering of school pupils in one place for the purpose of checking attendance, uniform, giving information, etc.

➤ **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

Activities outside of the normal subject activities e.g. *sports, debating*, etc.

WELLBEING:

Civic, Social & Political Education (CSPE); Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE); Physical Education (PE); Guidance

SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT (SNA):

Assists in the care of some young people with special educational needs

FIELD TRIP:

An outing from the school for the purpose of allowing Leaving Certificate pupils to carry out project-work essential for a particular subject e.g. *Geography or Science*.

➤ **MOCK EXAMS/PRE'S:**

A 'trial run' for the JCSA (*Junior Cycle Student Award*) and Leaving Certificate exams, usually around February of Third Year and Sixth Year.

➤ **PRACTICAL EXAMS:**

Exams where Leaving Certificate pupils carry out activities essential for a particular subject e.g. *cooking for Home Economics, drawing for Art* etc. These exams usually take place around May of Sixth Year.

➤ **ORALS:**

Leaving Certificate pupils are interviewed by an external examiner for about 15 minutes in Irish, French or German etc. These exams usually take place around Easter in Sixth Year.

CLASSROOM BASED ASSESSMENTS:

Used in subject assessments by student's teachers, reported on in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

BSP - BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLAN

A plan created by a student, their parent(s) and relevant staff to support a student towards behaving in a more appropriate way.

IEP - INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

Detailed learning goals to be achieved by the student, over a set period, and the resources needed to do this.

PLUs - PRIORITY LEARNING UNITS

Key skills to be developed through L1LPs and L2LPs, such as Communication and Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Care, The Arts, PE, Living in the Community and Preparing for Work.

L1LP - LEVEL ONE LEARNING PROGRAMME

These are made up of PLUs and short courses.

L2LP - LEVEL TWO LEARNING PROGRAMME

These are made up of PLUs and short courses.

JCPA - JUNIOR CYCLE PROFILE OF ACHIEVEMENT

A report on student achievement across the Junior Cycle.

CO-CURRICULAR

Out of class activities that add to in-class learning, such as Music, Drama and Debating.

IT - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Use of computer hardware and software for learning purposes.

BOM - BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Manages the school on behalf of the patron.

HSCL - HOME SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIAISON CO-ORDINATOR

HSCL Coordinators work with the adult(s) in a child's life to support their attendance, participation and retention in school.

SCP - SCHOOL COMPLETION PROGRAMME

SCP work with children and young people who are at risk of early school leaving.

EWO - EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE

EWOs support families to ensure children attend school regularly. EWOs provide guidance with finding school places, suspensions and expulsions. Where children are not attending school regularly, a school principal may make a referral to an EWO. The EWO will then contact the family to make plans for improving attendance. Parents can also refer to an EWO.

Sample of a List of Post-Primary School Open Nights

School	Type	Date of Open Night	Time
(Girls, Boys, Co. Ed.)			

Handout 3:3 Costs of Attending Post-Primary School

	School A:	School B:	School C:
	€	€	€
↘ Uniform:			
↘ Shoes / Runners:			
↘ PE Gear:			
↘ Books:			
↘ Bag:			
↘ Workbooks:			
↘ Copies:			
↘ Locker:			
↘ Voluntary Contribution/Fees:			
↘ Insurance:			
↘ State Exam Fees:			
↘ Exam Papers:			
↘ Pre-JCSA/Leaving Cert Fees:			
↘ Lunch Money:			
↘ Travel Costs:			
↘ Option Subject Materials:			

Sample Questions you might like to ask at the Open Night

↘ What time does school start?	↘ How are the lockers organised?
↘ What time does school finish?	↘ Is there Transition Year?
↘ What times are lunch and break times?	↘ Is there Leaving Cert Applied?
↘ Is there a Homework Club?	↘ How can I help my child succeed in secondary school?
↘ Is there evening study?	↘ Is there HSCL (Home School Community Liaison)?
↘ Is there a Breakfast Club?	
↘ Are there extra curricular activities?	↘ Is there a Learning Support coordinator/department?
↘ Is there a charge?	
↘ Is there a Student Support/ Pastoral Care Team?	↘ Will I have access to my child's assessment results?
↘ Is there a book rental scheme?	
↘ Where can I buy the uniform?	↘ Who is my first point of contact if I need to discuss an issue about my child? How do I go about it?
↘ How long are First Year Students recommended to spend on homework?	
↘ What do I do if my child is absent from school?	↘ How are First Year classes divided? Streaming or Mixed ability?
↘ What subjects are on offer?	
↘ How are subjects grouped? e.g. Can I do Home Economics and French?	



‘A PARTNER IS SOMEONE WHO IS CLOSELY INVOLVED WITH A SCHOOL, SOMEONE WHO SHARES - AND EVEN HELPS TO SHAPE – THE AIMS OF THE SCHOOL, AND IS COMMITTED TO PUTTING THESE AIMS INTO PRACTICE.’

- Hughes, Wikeley and Nash

↘ Session Plan 4:

The Application Process

Timing: 6th Class - Term 1

Time allocation: 1.5 hours

Rationale for this Session:

At this time, the parents' focus is on applying for their chosen post-primary school for the child. This session is primarily about filling out a school's application form and introduce the system of entrance assessments for post-primary schools.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to provide information and guidance on the completion of school application forms and the acceptance of places once offered.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will:

1. Understand *The Education System in Ireland*.
2. Understand the application process for post-primary schools.
3. Know the information necessary to complete application forms.
4. Be afforded the opportunity to complete an application form during the session if required.
5. Know how to accept a place that has been offered to their child.
6. Understand the reasoning behind the entrance assessment.

SESSION PLAN 4: *The Application Process*

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
10min	Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome participants reminding them that this is the fourth of a series of seven sessions aimed at helping them through their child's transfer from primary to post-primary school. ➤ Invite participants to introduce themselves and say what they recall most from the last three sessions. ➤ Outline the agenda for the day's session, highlighting the aim of the session which is to prepare them to complete the application process. ➤ Display the ground rules discussed in the first session, reminding members that these rules still apply and asking for any comments or concerns about the ground rules. 	Round.	<p>Agenda for this session on the flip chart.</p> <p>Ground rules on flip chart from first session.</p>
10min	Understanding the Application Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask members to brainstorm what is involved in the application process for the post-primary schools in their locality. ➤ Record all comments on the flip chart without reservation. ➤ Clear up any inaccurate information or confusion ensuring all members, understand exactly what they need to do to apply to their chosen school. ➤ Refer to Handout 3:3 <i>Cost of attending post-primary school.</i> 	<p>Brainstorm.</p> <p>Large Group Discussion.</p>	Flip Chart and Pens.
25min	Completing the Application form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give out a sample copy of the application form to each member of the group. 	Demonstration.	Sample of post-primary application forms.

	<p>✎ The facilitators move through the group offering individual assistance where necessary.</p> <p>✎ All members should have their form completed before moving on.</p>		
15min	BREAK		
10min	<p>Accepting places once offered:</p> <p>✎ Facilitate a group discussion on how to accept a place if one is offered. Hand out sample offer of place letter and sample acceptance form.</p> <p>✎ Explain to the group what to do if a parent does not receive a school place.</p>	Whole group discussion.	<p>Handout: 4:1</p> <p><i>Sample offer of place letter & Sample Acceptance Form.</i></p>
10min	<p>The Entrance Assessment:</p> <p>✎ Ask people to share their feelings on entrance assessments.</p> <p>✎ Explain the importance of the entrance assessment and how it usually works.</p> <p>✎ Ask members to list what the child needs to bring to the entrance assessment.</p>	<p>Whole group discussion.</p> <p>Presentation.</p> <p>Brainstorm.</p>	<p>Flip Chart and Pens.</p> <p>Handout: 4:2</p> <p><i>What your child needs to bring to entrance assessment.</i></p>
10min	<p>Closing round:</p> <p>✎ Conduct the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn.</p> <p>1. <i>How do you feel at the end of this session?</i></p> <p>2. <i>What was your learning from this session?</i></p>	Round	

Handout 4:1 Sample 'Offer of Place' Letter & Acceptance Form

31st January 20__

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In accordance with the Enrolment policy of [Name of School], the Board of Management of [Name of School] is pleased to offer your son/daughter, [Name of Child], a place in this school in first Year, commencing in the 20__/20__ Academic Year. Please confirm your acceptance/non acceptance of this place by completing the attached confirmation slip and returning to the Secretary, Board of Management, [Name of School], [School Address] by Wednesday, 7th February, by 12noon.

Yours faithfully,

[Secretary's Name]

Secretary
Board of Management

Please detach

Name of applicant: [Child's Name] Date of Birth: [Child's Date of Birth]
Primary School: [Primary School's Name]
Address: [Primary School's Address]

Please tick the appropriate box

I accept the offer of a place in [Secondary School's Name] ☐
I do not accept the offer of a place in [Secondary School's Name] ☐

Signed: [Parent/Guardian's Name] Date: [The Date]
Parent/Guardian.

Handout 4:2 What your child needs to bring to the Entrance Assessment

SCHOOL: _____ DATE: ____/____/____ TIME: _____

What does my child need to bring to the entrance assessment?

- ✎ Pens.
- ✎ Sharpener.
- ✎ Pencil.
- ✎ A light snack.
- ✎ Rubber.
- ✎ A drink.
- ✎ Ruler.

What are these assessments like?

- ✎ There is no need to worry or panic.
- ✎ Your child is being assessed on everyday skills they use in Sixth Class.
- ✎ Subjects covered in the assessment are, English, Irish and Maths.
- ✎ There will be no trick questions.

Why are these assessments done?

- ✎ All students are assessed to find out what they have learnt in Sixth Class.
- ✎ Post-primary teachers can then plan and prepare the First Year curriculum.

What happens if my son/daughter needs help?

- ✎ Any student who needs help may put up their hand and someone will come down to assist him/her immediately.

Do we get the results of the assessment?

- ✎ No, the school will keep the results.
- ✎ They will be given to the post-primary teachers involved with the First Years.



‘EDUCATION IS NOT
PREPARATION FOR LIFE;
EDUCATION IS LIFE ITSELF.’

- John Dewey

Session Plan 5:

Preparing for Post-Primary School

Timing: 6th Class - Term 2

Time allocation: 1.5 hours

Rationale for this Session:

At this stage parents will be aware of the school their child has been offered. This session aims to help parents to understand the systems and procedures in the post-primary school their child will be attending.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to improve parents' understanding of how post-primary school works.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will have:

1. A sense of ownership and involvement with their child's new school.
2. More confidence to engage with management, teachers and support staff in their child's new school.
3. An understanding of the importance of full attendance.
4. An ability to read their child's new timetable.
5. A discussion around subjects available in post-primary schools.
6. An introduction to the jargon and terminology of post-primary schools.

SESSION PLAN 5: *Preparing for Post-Primary School*

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
10min	<p>Introduction:</p> <p>➤ Welcome participants reminding them that this is the fifth of a series of seven sessions aimed at helping them through their child's transfer from primary school to post-primary school.</p> <p>➤ Remind participants that this will be the last session they will attend in the primary school and the final two sessions of the Transfer Programme will take place in their child's post-primary school.</p> <p>➤ Invite participants to remind the other members of their name and say:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What they recall most from the last three sessions? 2. How they feel finishing with this group? <p>➤ Outline the agenda for the day's session highlighting that the aim of the session is to help them to understand how their child's post-primary school works.</p> <p>➤ Display the ground rules discussed in the first session reminding members that these rules still apply asking for any comments or concerns about the ground rules.</p>	Round.	<p>Agenda for this session on the flip chart.</p> <p>Ground rules on flip chart from first session.</p>
15min	<p>The structure of your child's school system:</p> <p>➤ Ask the group to think about the key people their child will meet in their new school. Use the PowerPoint presentation The People in Our School to ensure all present know the different roles people play in the post-primary school setting.</p>	<p>Brainstorm.</p> <p>PowerPoint.</p> <p>Discussion.</p> <p>Handout.</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>The People in Our School.</i></p> <p>Handout 5:1 <i>Structure of Post-Primary Schools.</i></p>

	<p>⇩ Divide the parents into small groups and ask them to complete the handout 5:1 writing in the names of each member of staff that will have contact with their child.</p>		
15min	BREAK		
20min	<p>Understanding subjects available in post-primary school:</p> <p>⇩ Give out the full list of subject choices. Ask members to circle the subjects available to his/her child (refer to school prospectus if required).</p> <p>⇩ Explain what is involved in the subjects members do not understand.</p> <p>⇩ Explain the importance of subject choice for future career and third level options.</p>	Discuss different subjects and what is done in each.	<p>Handout 5:2 <i>Subject list.</i></p> <p>Description of each subject.</p>
10min	<p>Reading class timetable:</p> <p>⇩ Give out sample copies of timetables for the post-primary schools represented in the group.</p> <p>⇩ Explain how to read the different timetables.</p>	Large group discussion.	Copies of Sample timetables.
10min	<p>Programme Evaluation:</p> <p>⇩ The facilitator distributes the evaluation sheet for the parents to complete.</p> <p>⇩ While the evaluation sheet is short and simple, the facilitators must be mindful of literacy difficulties among the group.</p>	Worksheet.	<p>Handout 5:3 <i>Evaluation sheet.</i></p>
10min	<p>Close:</p> <p>⇩ Conduct the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn.</p> <p>1. <i>How do you feel at the end of this programme?</i></p> <p>2. <i>What was your learning from this programme?</i></p>	Round.	

Handout 5:1 Structure of Post-Primary School

JOB TITLE	NAME
Principal: (Head of the school)	
Deputy Principal: (Works closely with the Principal managing the school)	
Year Head: (In charge of looking after a particular year group)	
Home School Community Liaison Coordinator (HSCL): (A link between the home and school. Supports parents)	
Learning Support (SEN): (Provides additional assistance to students)	
Guidance Counsellor: (Supports Students' well being)	
Subject Teacher: (Teaches a particular subject)	
Chaplain: (Provides support to students in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school)	
Care Team: (Looks after the needs of individual students)	
School Secretary: (Works in the school office)	
Canteen Staff: (Sells foods at break times to students and staff)	
Caretaker: (Takes care of the school building)	
Parents Council: (Represents the voice of the parents. Supports and promotes the school)	
Cleaners: (Clean the school)	
Behavioural Support Teacher: (Helps first year students to settle into the school and helps students with challenging behaviour)	
School Completion Programme (SCP): (Supports students)	
Educational Welfare Officer (EWO): (Monitors school attendance)	

Subjects:

- English;
- Irish;
- Maths;
- Science;
- Business;
- Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian);
- History;
- Geography;
- Religion;
- Art;
- Home Economics;
- Music;
- Technology (Woodwork, Technical Graphics, Metalwork, Technology);
- Jewish Studies;
- and Classics.

Short Courses:

Nine short courses have been developed by the N.C.C.A. and can be used 'off the shelf' by schools in their junior cycle programme. But schools can also develop their own short course locally. Up to four short courses can be included in the junior cycle programme.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| → Civic, Social & Political Education. | → Exploring Forensic Science. |
| → Coding. | → Physical Education (P.E.). |
| → Digital Media Literacy. | → Artistic Performance. |
| → Social, Personal & Health Education. | → A Personal Project. |
| → Chinese Language and Culture. | |

Handout 5:3 Evaluation Sheet



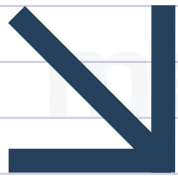
PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE FORM, AND IN THIS WAY HELP US IMPROVE OUR PROGRAMME. CIRCLE THE RESPONSE THAT MOST ACCURATELY FITS YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS COURSE.

**Please mark where your general satisfaction level is for the following:*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Transfer programme met my expectations.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time allowed for the sessions worked.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The facilitators were clear and easy to understand.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The questions I had were answered.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt comfortable in this group.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel more positive about my child moving to post-primary school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand my role in helping my child move from primary school to post-primary.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have applied for my child's new school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the education system better.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand how important it is for my child to attend regularly and stay in school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Transfer programme



Comments/Notes

The time allowed for the sessions worked.

The facilitators were clear and easy to understand.

The questions I had were answered.

I felt comfortable in the group.



‘NINE TENTHS OF
EDUCATION IS
ENCOURAGEMENT.’

- *Anatole France*

Session Plan 6:

Adjusting to Post-Primary School

Timing: 1st Year - Term 1

Time allocation: 2 hours

Rationale for this Session:

The initial session of the Second Level Programme will promote the continued engagement of parents who had attended the five sessions in their primary school. However, as the programme may not be available in all primary schools, some parents will be new to the process and this is reflected in the session plans. The child has made the transfer from primary to post-primary school at this stage so fears and concerns about choice of school and filling application forms are in the past. However, many parents are nervous and anxious about their child's ability to cope in post-primary school and of their own ability to help their child through this process. It is a key role for the programme facilitators to allay fears and support parents at this crucial time in their child's transition.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to re-establish the group and introduce the post-primary phase of the programme.

Session Objectives - At the end of the session participants will:

1. Continue to engage with the transfer programme recognising that they are key stakeholders in their child's education.
2. Have identified their needs in terms of helping their child to successfully complete post-primary education at this school.
3. Have addressed any fears or concerns in relation to their child's progression through post-primary.
4. Have a sense of ownership of and involvement in their child's post-primary school.
5. Be aware of the options and supports available to them and their children in post-primary.
6. Have increased their aspirations for their child's future.
7. Understand the importance of full attendance for the learning process.
8. Be empowered as partners in their child's education and have confidence in accessing the school system.

SESSION PLAN 6: Adjusting to Post-Primary School

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
5min	Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitators introduce themselves, welcome people to the programme, briefly putting the programme in context. ➤ Explain to the group that some members may have attended a Transfer programme in their child's primary school and some may not. ➤ Highlight to the group that this session and the next session will cover what they need to know in post-primary school. 		
20min	Hopes and expectations for the Programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The lead facilitator invites participants to introduce themselves and say what they hope to get from the session. ➤ The second facilitator writes up participants' names and hopes for the session on the flipchart. ➤ The facilitators hand out the proposed programme content for this session and the next session. They check whether people are happy with the content and ensure members make the connection between their individual needs and the programme content. 	Round.	Flip Chart and Pens.
15min	Ground rules/Group contract: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator asks participants to name the things that will help them to participate fully in the Programme; things that will allow the group to work together as a group e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidentiality - It's ok to ask questions and say you don't understand - We will listen to one another - Mobile phones on silent - Having fun 	Large group discussion. Notes on Chart.	Handout 6:1 <i>Programme outline for two sessions.</i> Flip Chart and Pens.
20min	Aspirations for my child's future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Break the group into pairs, asking participants to sit with somebody they do not know. Ask the pairs to discuss what future they would like for their children in terms of jobs or careers. ➤ Ask the pairs to feed back to the main group. ➤ Re-introduce Handout 1:2 on the <i>Structure of the Education System in Ireland</i> and the Handout 6:2 <i>Education for All</i>. ➤ In small groups, the facilitator encourages the group to explore their 	Pair work. Small group discussion. Whole group Discussion.	Handout 1:2 <i>Structure of the Education System in Ireland.</i> Handout 6:2 <i>Education for all.</i>

	<p>understanding of the Irish education system and where their child fits into it.</p> <p>➤ Facilitate the group to discuss the feedback. Highlight the role of education in helping children to reach their full potential in terms of achieving better employment prospects.</p>		
15min	BREAK		
25min	<p>Fears and concerns for me and my child in post-primary school:</p> <p>➤ Break the group into small groups of 3/4. Ask the members to list any problems that may have emerged for their child since the transfer from primary to post-primary school.</p> <p>➤ Take feedback from each group in turn. The second facilitator will write notes up on the flipchart.</p> <p>➤ Explore with the group how these concerns can be addressed.</p> <p>➤ The facilitators will use samples of timetables, journals and absence notes to discuss the practical aspects of school life for their child.</p> <p>➤ Other topics for discussion may include: lockers, assembly, lunchtime activities, after-school activities, homework club/ supervised study, code of discipline, uniform, consent forms and procedures for contacting members of school staff.</p>	Small group discussion.	<p>Flip Chart and Pens.</p> <p>Relevant handouts-will vary from school to school.</p> <p>Sample School Journals.</p>
10min	<p>Post-primary school Structures:</p> <p>➤ The facilitator distributes the Handout 5:1 <i>Structure of Post-Primary School</i> and Handout 6:3 <i>My Child's Teachers</i>.</p> <p>➤ This hand-out, <i>My Child's Teachers</i>, will include all school personnel and those who may be associated with your child's school life.</p> <p>➤ This will be discussed as a whole group exercise. The relevant personnel will be named (<i>Each school will be different</i>). Each person's role will be explained.</p>	Whole group discussion.	<p>Handout 5:1 <i>Structure of Post-Primary School.</i></p> <p>Handout 6:3 <i>My Child's Teachers.</i></p>
10min	<p>Evaluation and Close:</p> <p>➤ The facilitator conducts the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>How do you feel at the end of this session?</i> 2. <i>Identify one thing that you now know that will help you to support your child in post-primary school?</i> 	Round.	

Handout 6:1 Programme Outline - 1st Year Post-Primary School

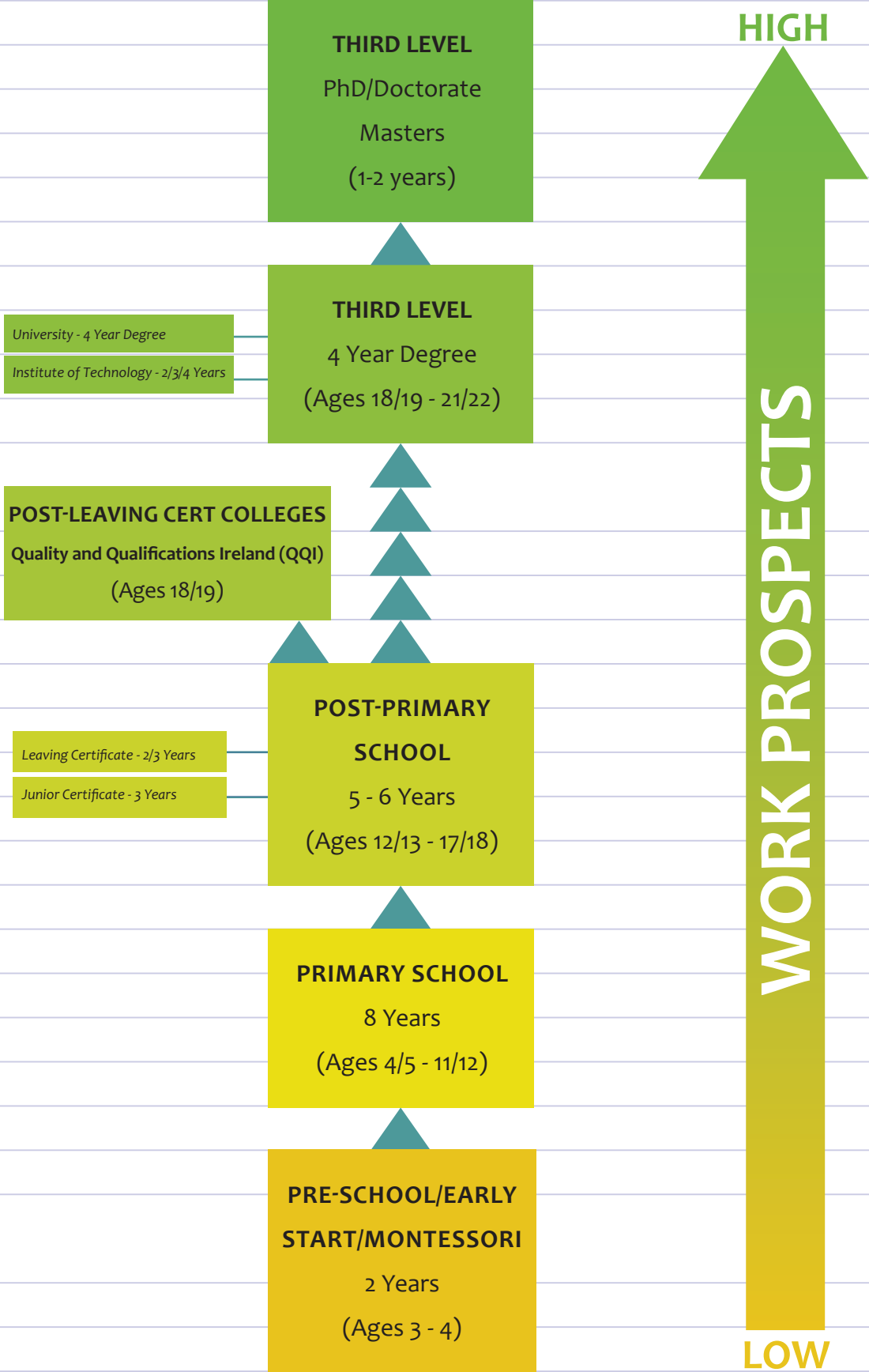
Session Six:

- Introductions.
- Aspirations for my child's future.
- Hopes and expectations for the programme at second level.
- Fears and concerns for my child in post-primary school.
- Ground rules/group contract.
- Post-primary school structures.

Session Seven:

- Introductions.
- My responsibility as a parent in relation to my child's education.
- Understanding the education system.
- Getting the most from Parent Teacher meetings.
- Ground rules/group contract.
- Understanding the school examination system.

Handout 1:2 Structure of the Education System in Ireland



Handout 6:2 Education for all

Student Level:	Typical Age:	FETAC Level:	Qualification:	Where:
CAO Colleges	22-24	10	PhD	Institutes of Technology e.g. Waterford I.T. and Universities e.g. U.L.
		9	Masters, Postgraduate Diploma	Institutes of Technology e.g. Dublin I.T. and Universities e.g. U.C.C
	18-22	8	Honours Degree or Higher Diploma	Institutes of Technology e.g. Athlone I.T. and Universities e.g. U.C.D
	18-22	7	Ordinary Degree	Institutes of Technology e.g. G.M.I.T.
	18-22	6	Higher Certificate or Advanced Certificate	Institutes of Technology e.g. I.T. Tralee
Colleges of Further Education	18-22	5	FETAC Level 5	Post-Leaving Cert Colleges e.g. Limerick Senior College
Secondary School Education	16-18	4	Leaving Certificate	Post-Primary School
	12-16	3	J.C.S.A.	Post-Primary School
Primary Education	4-12	2	8 Years	Primary School
	3-4	1	2 Years	Pre-School

HIGH

WORK PROSPECTS

LOW

Handout 6:3 My Child's Teachers

SUBJECT:

e.g. *English*

TEACHER:

e.g. Mrs. Kelly

[illegible]

A background image showing three students in a classroom setting. In the foreground, a student's hand is visible, holding a pen and writing on a notebook. Behind them, two other students are seated at a desk, looking towards the right. The student in the middle is wearing a colorful plaid shirt. The student on the right is wearing a blue shirt. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a window in the background.

↙ 'PARTNERSHIP IS A WORKING
RELATIONSHIP THAT IS
CHARACTERISED BY A SHARED
SENSE OF PURPOSE, MUTUAL
RESPECT AND A WILLINGNESS
TO NEGOTIATE. THIS IMPLIES
A SHARING OF INFORMATION,
RESPONSIBILITY, SKILLS,
DECISION MAKING AND
ACCOUNTABILITY.'

- Pugh

↘ Session Plan 7:

Getting the most from Post-Primary School

Timing: 1st Year - Term 1

Time allocation: 2 hours

Rationale for this Session:

This is the final session in the overall Transfer Programme. Some parents will have attended all seven sessions of the programme while others will only have attended the final two sessions in their child's post-primary school. This session is about wrapping up the programme and ensuring parents are more positive about engaging with their child's post-primary school.

Session Aim:

The aim of this session is to further enhance parents' understanding of the education system and the importance of their role in helping their child to successfully complete post-primary school and develop aspirations to move on to further education and training.

Session Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will:

1. Have increased aspirations for their child's future.
2. Have an overview of the education system in Ireland.
3. Have a sound understanding of the J.C.S.A. Programme, Leaving Certificate, L.C.V.P., L.C.A. and T.Y. Programme.
4. Understand the system of grades, levels and points.
5. Understand the importance of full attendance for the learning process.
6. Know their legal responsibilities in terms of their child's education.
7. Understand the value of Post-Leaving Certificate education in terms of employment and their children reaching their full potential.
8. Have a clear understanding of the supports and avenues available in accessing further education/employment.

SESSION PLAN 7: *Getting the most from Post-Primary School*

Time:	Content:	Method:	Resources:
15min	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome participants, reminding them that this is the final session of a series of seven sessions aimed at helping them through their child's transfer from primary to post-primary school. ➤ Repeat that for some parents this will only be their second session and that this is OK at this stage. ➤ Invite participants to re-introduce themselves and say what they recall most from the last session. ➤ Outline the agenda for the day's session. Highlight that the aim of the session is to increase their understanding of the education system with a view to empowering them to support their child to successfully complete post-primary school and move on to further education and training. ➤ Display the ground rules discussed in the first session, reminding participants that these rules still apply and asking for any comments or concerns about these rules. ➤ Display the fears and concerns recorded in the first session. Invite members to discuss any new concerns that may have arisen. ➤ Pin the flip charts on the wall for the duration of the session. 	Round.	<p>Agenda for this session on the flip chart.</p> <p>Flip chart sheets from previous session.</p>
25min	<p>Understanding the post-primary education system of which your child is a part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator asks the group what they know about the education system. Prompt questions could include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you know about the different levels and options open to your children? 2. Do you understand the exam system – Leaving Certificate, Junior Certificate etc.? 3. Do you know why some people go to Third Level and some people do not? 4. Do you know what the CAO is? 5. Do you know why people talk about points? 6. Do you know the cost of going on to further education? 	Whole Group Discussion.	<p>Flip Chart, Pens.</p> <p>Data, Projector, Laptop.</p> <p>PowerPoint: The Post-Primary Education System.</p> <p>Handout 7:1 The Leaving Certificate Points System.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents who have attended the Transfer Programme in primary school will have covered some of this already but it is ok to cover this again. The facilitator gives a PowerPoint presentation on the post-primary education system to stimulate discussion The facilitator encourages the group to explore and discuss the information provided. 		Handout 7:2 <i>The Irish Post-Primary Education System.</i> Printed version of slideshow.
15min	BREAK		
30min	My legal responsibility as a parent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator introduces the topic of the legal responsibilities of parents in relation to their children's education, by asking parents to list their legal responsibilities. The facilitator will highlight their legal responsibilities as parents through a PowerPoint presentation and reinforce it with a handout from TUSLA. 	Brainstorm. PowerPoint Presentation. Discussion.	PowerPoint: TUSLA: The Child and Family Agency. Handout 7:3 TUSLA, Printed version of slideshow.
15min	Getting the most from the parent teacher meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide the group into small groups of 3/4. Ask parents to explore what they might expect at a post-primary school Parent/Teacher meeting and then list questions they might want to ask at the meeting. Highlight that parents will receive a report sheet on their child before the Parent/Teacher meeting takes place. Facilitate each small group to feedback to the big group. Encourage a general discussion on the points raised. 	Small group discussion. Feedback and big group discussion.	Flip chart. Paper and pens. Sample report from your school.
10min	Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator distributes the evaluation sheet for the parents to complete. While the evaluation sheet is short and simple the facilitators must be mindful of literacy difficulties among the group. 		Handout 7:4 <i>Evaluation Sheet.</i>
10min	Close: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator conducts the closing round asking each participant the same two questions in turn: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel at the end of this last session? What did you get from this Programme? 	Round.	

Handout 7:2 The Irish Post-Primary Education System

JUNIOR CYCLE:

- JCSA (Junior Cycle Student Award - 3 years)
- 12/13yrs – 15/16yrs.
- JCSA taken at the end of 3rd yr.
- JCSA Programme.

SENIOR CYCLE:

- Transition Year (1 Year: 15/16yrs)
- Leaving Cert. (2 Years: 16 -18/19yrs)
- Subjects taken for Leaving Cert.
- Leaving Cert. Applied – 2 Years
(prepares students for practical and working life)

JUNIOR CYCLE STUDENT AWARD (JCSA) PROGRAMME:

From 2018 all students in third year will be examined in six to eight subjects.

- A maximum of eight subjects.
- Short courses in new areas.
- New assessment arrangements.
- Focus on 8 Key Skills.

Subjects:

English; Irish; Maths; Science; Business; Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian); History; Geography; Religion; Art; Home Economics; Music; Technology (Woodwork, Technical Graphics, Metalwork, Technology); Jewish Studies and Classics.

Short Courses:

Nine short courses have been developed by the N.C.C.A. and can be used 'off the shelf' by schools in their junior cycle programme. But schools can also develop their own short course locally. Up to four short courses can be included in the junior cycle programme.

*Key Skills:

Being
Literate;
Managing
Myself;
Staying Well;
Managing
Information
& Thinking;
Being
Nurate;
Being
Creative;
Working
With Others;
Communi-
cating;

- 1. Civic, Social & Political Education.
- 4. Social, Personal & Health Education.
- 7. Artistic Performance

- 2. Digital Media Literacy.
- 5. Physical Education
- 8. A personal Project: Caring for Animals.

- 3. Coding.
- 6. Exploring Forensic Science
- 9. Chinese Language & Culture

In-House Exam Structure:

➤ All classes have Christmas tests.

➤ 3rd and 6th years sit mock exams/pres usually in February.

➤ 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th years all sit summer tests.

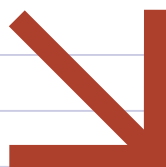
Assessment:

Students will get more detailed reports on their progress in the junior cycle. The reports will look at how well they are doing in literacy and numeracy, and they will also be asked to comment on their own progress before the report is sent to their parents or guardians. There will be an examination at the end of the junior cycle, 40% of the marks will now be for work done before the JCSEA exam, in second and third year. At the end of third year, students will receive a qualification called the **National Certificate of Junior Cycle Education**.



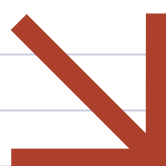
TRANSITION YEAR:

- Transition Year provides students with an opportunity to experience a wide range of educational inputs, life skills and work experience by encouraging creativity and responsibility for one's self.
- The Transition Year is an optional one-year programme.



LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED:

- The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two-year Leaving Certificate available to students who wish to follow a practical programme with a strong vocational emphasis.
- While certification in the LCA does not qualify for direct entry to third-level courses, students who successfully complete the programme are able to proceed to many Post-Leaving Certificate courses. i.e. *Limerick Senior College*.



LEAVING CERTIFICATE:

- The Senior Cycle caters for students in the 15 to 18 year old age group.
- At the end of the senior cycle the Leaving Certificate Examination is taken. This is the most widely taken programme in which students must take at least five subjects, including Irish (*with the exception of those entering the system after 11 years of age and those who have an Irish Exemption*).
- Students who want to go on to Third Level must do the Leaving Cert in order to get points to get into College.
- More detailed information on the points system will be discussed in First Year.

Handout 7:3 TUSLA - The Child and Family Agency

PARENTS' LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION:

- Every child aged between 6 and 16 must receive an education.
- Your child has a right to an education.
- A good education, combined with loving care and encouragement, will give your child a great start in life.
- A good education means your child will be more likely to: Learn more, Develop their skills and talents, Make and keep friends, Have more confidence, Do better at exams, Be happy in life, Be employed, Get a higher earning job when they start working and avoid getting involved in crime.

WHAT YOU MUST DO IF YOUR CHILD CANNOT BE AT SCHOOL:

- You must tell the school that your child cannot attend and say why.
- The school will tell you how to give them this information – usually, the school will ask for a note.
- Very often, there will be good reasons for a child not being in school and these will be taken into account if they are explained to the school.

WHAT THE SCHOOL MUST DO IF YOUR CHILD MISSES A LOT OF SCHOOL:

- The school must tell TUSLA if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year or if it is concerned that your child is missing too much school.
- If your child misses a lot of days due to illness, you must send in doctor's notes to cover these days.

WHAT CAN I DO IF THE SCHOOL IS PREVENTING MY CHILD FROM ATTENDING?

- If a school has refused to enroll or has suspended or expelled your child and you are not happy with that decision, you can appeal it.
- You can do this by filling in an Appeals Form which should be available on request from the school (or ETB) or can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Skills web-site at

www.education.ie

CAN I TAKE MY CHILD ON HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME?

- Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time, both educationally and for other school activities.
- It will be difficult for them to catch up on work later on.
- As a result they may fall behind with school work and lose confidence in their abilities.
- Every day counts in a child's education and parents are strongly advised against taking their children out of school for holidays during term time for this reason.

TOP TIPS FROM PARENTS:

- Get your child to bed in good time on school days and Sunday nights. Plenty of sleep and rest will help a child stay alert.
- Set the alarm clock in good time and get your child to school on time.
- Help your child pack his or her schoolbag the night before.
- Prepare your child's lunch the night before so you and your child have more time to get ready in the morning.
- Keep school clothes and books neat and ready for use.

PROTECTING YOUR CHILD'S RIGHT TO EDUCATION:

- TUSLA will help you in whatever way they can to ensure your child gets an education.
- However, you can be taken to court and fined or imprisoned if you do not co-operate with the Board.
- Legal action will be taken in exceptional cases if it is the only way a child's right to an education can be safeguarded.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD TO ATTEND SCHOOL?

- Make education important in your home and let your child know it is not okay to miss school.
- Show that you think education is important. Look at your child's school books. Ask about what they are doing. Be interested in their news.
- Help your child to be proud of a good attendance record.
- Build your child's confidence. Praise them when they do well.
- Read letters and reports from the school and know the school rules.
- Go to school meetings and get to know the teacher, staff and your child's friends.
- Don't take family holidays during school term.
- Be alert for reasons why your child may not want to go to school. If your child finds school work hard, talk to the school right away.
- Do not encourage your child to take on a part-time job during school term.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU NEED SUPPORT?

- You can contact an Educational Welfare Officer on low-call number **01 771 8500**

- Check out the website on www.tusla.ie

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Handout 7:4 Evaluation Sheet



PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE FORM, AND IN THIS WAY HELP US IMPROVE OUR PROGRAMME. CIRCLE THE RESPONSE THAT MOST ACCURATELY FITS YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS COURSE.

**Please mark where your general satisfaction level is for the following:*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Transfer programme met my expectations.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time allowed for the sessions worked.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The facilitators were clear and easy to understand.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The questions I had were answered.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt comfortable in this group.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I know more about how my child's new school works.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel more confident about dealing with teachers and other staff in my child's new school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the options and supports available to my child in post-primary school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the education system better.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand how important it is for my child to attend regularly and stay in school.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Handout 7:1 Leaving Certificate Points System

↙ HIGHER LEVEL SUBJECTS:

Percentage (%):	Grade:	Points:
90-100	H1	100
80<90	H2	88
70<80	H3	77
60<70	H4	66
50<60	H5	56
40<50	H6	46
30<40	H7	37
<30	H8	0

↙ ORDINARY LEVEL SUBJECTS:

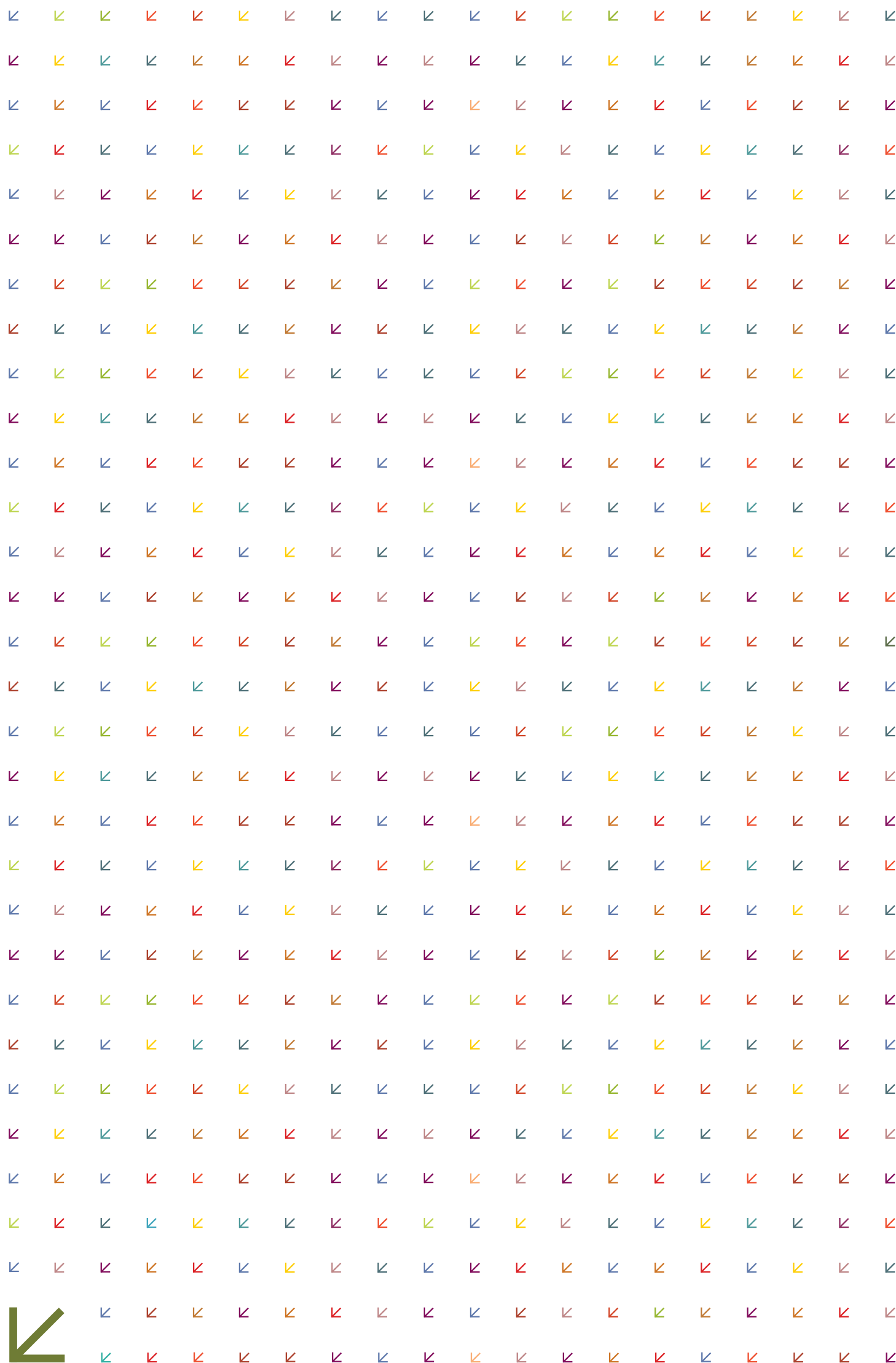
Percentage (%):	Grade:	Points:
90-100	O1	56
80<90	O2	46
70<80	O3	37
60<70	O4	28
50<60	O5	20
40<50	O6	12
30<40	O7	0
<30	O8	0

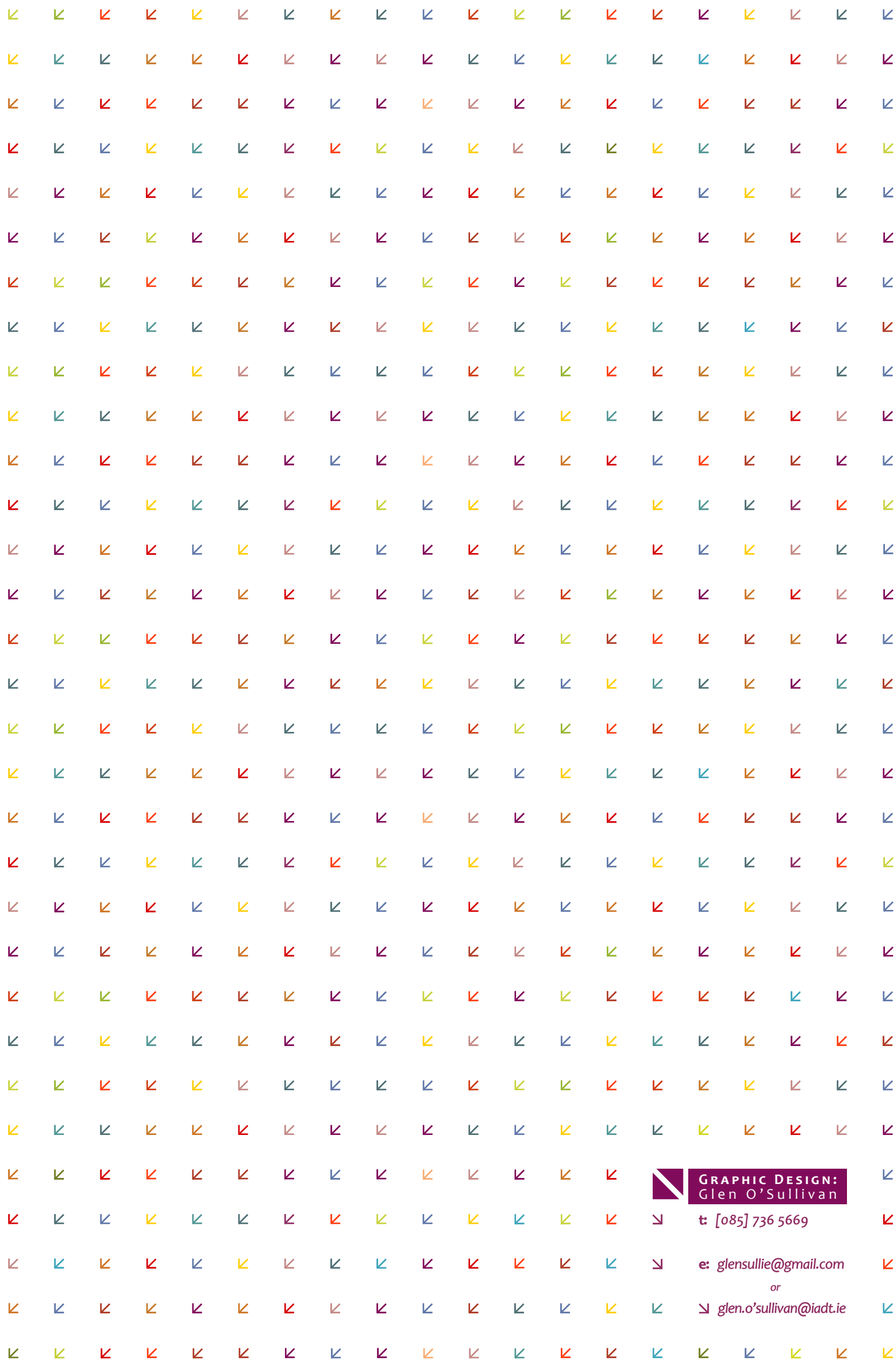
↙ LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME (L.C.V.P.).

L.C.V.P. Grade:	Revised L.C.V.P Points:
Distinction	66
Merit	46
Pass	28

78







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TÚSLA


An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



LIMERICK INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA
LUIMNIGH



Our Lady of Lourdes Local Education Committee



The Home School Community Liaison Scheme consists of a partnership and collaboration of the complementary skills of parents and teachers. The transfer from primary to post-primary school is recognised as a critical point in a child's education path. Home School Community Liaison coordinators have, in consultation with parents, designed an in-depth Transfer Programme for the parents of children transferring from primary to post-primary school. The programme is designed as a series of interactive facilitated sessions to be co-facilitated by parents and HSCL coordinators. It is proposed that this transfer programme will start in 5th Class, continue through 6th Class and be completed in 1st Year. It is a programme designed to empower parents to guide their child through the school transfer process and to support their child's progression in education.