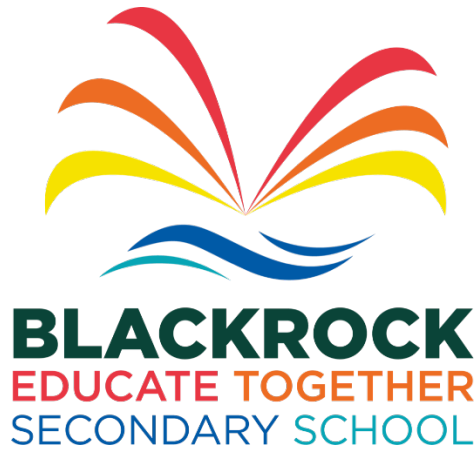




Blackrock Educate Together Secondary School

TY Work Experience Policy

An Educate Together second-level school will be guided by the four core principles as laid down in the Educate Together Charter (1990):

- 1) They will be **equality based** in character, ensuring that children and young people of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds have equal access to and rights within the school;
- 2) They will be **co-educational**, thereby encouraging children and young people to learn and live together;
- 3) They will be **child-centred**, respecting individual students' abilities to learn in unique ways;
- 4) Finally, Educate Together schools will be run on a **democratic** basis, encouraging active participation by parents and students in the daily life of the school whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers.

Mission

Blackrock ETSS is a student-centred, democratic school community that celebrates difference and creativity in a dynamic and vibrant learning environment defined by equality, integrity, and respect.

Vision

Educate Together is working towards an Ireland in which all people have access to an excellent education that is inclusive of all, irrespective of belief system, race, ethnicity, class, culture, gender, language, lifestyle and ability.

Values & Commitments

Educate Together is committed to:

- Placing the child and young person at the centre of the educational process;
- Respecting and celebrating the different and unique identities of all;
- An educational philosophy that promotes the values of justice, equality and human rights for all children and young people, and challenges injustice and unfair discrimination;
- Providing children and young people with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and attitudes that they need, enabling them to make informed moral decisions and preparing them to become caring members of society;
- Empowering children and young people to take an active role in society and in the stewardship of the environment;
- Working in a democratic way that embraces the input from children, parents, teachers and supporters to enable the highest level of partnership and participation;
- Working together and with other educational partners in a consultative and collaborative way;
- Building school communities which engage with, and work meaningfully with, the local community;
- Ensuring that this type of education is provided by the State and available to all families who wish to access it.

These commitments are reflected in the following mottoes: “Learn Together to Live Together” “No Child an Outsider”

Blackrock Educate Together Secondary School seeks to educate the whole person as a responsible member of society, confident of personal worth. Blackrock Educate Together Secondary School implements policies and practices which further the development of self-discipline and enable students to take progressive responsibility for their own lives and actions. It is within this framework that the TY Work Experience Policy is enacted by the stakeholders.



Blueprint for Educate Together Second-level Schools: Key Areas

Curriculum, Teaching & Learning ▼ An Educate Together second-level school will provide a curriculum and learning environment that equips students for the challenging world of the 21st century. The school will ensure that students are supported to take responsibility for their own learning, their physical, personal and social wellbeing, their relationships with others and their role in their local, national and global communities. ▼ By integrating 21st century teaching and learning strategies comprehensively and purposefully into the curriculum, and by assessing not only what students learn but how they learn, schools will nurture critical thinkers, problem solvers, effective communicators, creators and innovators.	The Ethical Curriculum ▼ An Educate Together second-level school will provide an ethical curriculum that focuses on the ethical, moral and social development of young people. It will provide the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that young people need to enable them to make informed moral decisions and prepare them for life in a pluralist society which embraces diversity. ▼ The ethical curriculum will be part of the daily life of the school, part of every subject, visible in curriculum resources and woven into the very fabric of all school processes, policies and practices.
Leadership, Management & Structure ▼ In an Educate Together second-level school the inclusive and democratic principle will extend to the various sets of relationships in the school. Schools will promote collective responsibility for the development of a shared vision and purpose. Underlying every decision taken in the school will be the need to provide the best learning environment, where all students can achieve and become enthusiastic, independent lifelong learners. ▼ The fullest participation by parents, students and teachers in decision-making processes will be developed. The management of the school will reflect the belief that leaders come from many places in an organisation.	The Built Environment ▼ An Educate Together second-level school community will consider how the built environment influences students' academic performance and well-being in school. The learning environment will express the Educate Together ethos and the physical setting will enhance and support the way students learn, teachers teach and the wider school community interacts. ▼ The Educate Together ethos and principles in school building design will address such issues as efficiency and sustainability, functionality and flexibility, building in context, accessibility, democratised spaces and aesthetic quality.

Introductory Statement

Transition Year (TY) Work Experience is a core component of the TY Programme in Blackrock Educate Together Secondary School. The purpose of work experience is to provide students with structured opportunities to:

- Experience the world of work in a real-life context
- Explore possible career pathways and areas of interest
- Develop transferable skills such as communication, responsibility, teamwork, and time management
- Foster independence, maturity and self-confidence

Blackrock ETSS relies on the goodwill and cooperation of employers and mentors who provide work placement opportunities. Their contribution is central to the success of the TY programme. This policy applies to all TY work experience placements undertaken during the academic year.

Relationship to the Ethos of the school

Blackrock ETSS is a student-centred, democratic school community that celebrates difference and creativity in a dynamic and vibrant learning environment defined by equality, integrity, and respect. Blackrock ETSS aims to develop a broad and inclusive range of aptitudes in each student, to develop the self-worth, self-esteem and self-confidence of each student, and to engage them in preparing for life after 2nd level education. The TY Work Experience Policy reflects this philosophy. The enhancement of self-esteem and life skills and the development of potential – academic, personal and emotional – leading to greater autonomy for all students, are its central goals. The policy reflects the uniqueness of Blackrock ETSS and its own context and circumstances.

Rationale

The Transition Year (TY) programme is a distinctive one-year senior cycle experience which takes place between 3rd year and 5th year. It is a mandatory programme in Blackrock ETSS. TY is designed to promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of students, preparing them for future study, work and life beyond school. Central to the TY philosophy is experiential learning, including meaningful engagement with the world of work, to support students' development of transferable skills, self-directed learning, and career awareness. This approach is articulated in the Department of Education's *Transition Year Programme Statement (2024)*, which highlight work experience as a means to broaden students' understanding of adult working life and to complement classroom-based learning through real-world contexts. It is a mandatory aspect of Transition Year in schools.

Structure of the Work Experience Programme

Weekly Placement - Mandatory

- TY students undertake work experience every Friday from the start of September to the end of May, subject to school activities and calendar events. This is a mandatory component of the TY programme – there are no classes scheduled for TY on Fridays to allow them to take part in the Work Experience Programme.
- Students are expected to secure a minimum of one work placement for the academic year, but are encouraged to source and experience different placements in different places of work over the course of the year. Work experience should, where possible, reflect a range of interests and career areas.

Block Placements - Optional

- Students may apply to complete block work experience placements where they demonstrate a particular interest in a chosen career area, and there is not a weekly placement available every Friday.
- A maximum of two one-week block placements is permitted per student:
 - One block placement between September and December.
 - One block placement between January and May.
- Block placements must:
 - Be approved in advance by the TY Coordinator and school management.
 - Not clash with TY events such as school trips, aptitude testing, examinations, or other compulsory school activities.
- Parents & Students must notify the TY coordinator of the placement a minimum of one week prior to the placement taking place, but are encouraged to notify the TY coordinator as soon as the placement is organised.
- Families should use the attendance feature of the app to ensure that the school office is informed that the student is on work placement.

Securing and Sourcing Work Experience Placements

- Students are responsible for finding their own suitable work placements.
- A list of example placements and links to previous placements will be made available by the TY Coordinator.
- All placements must be appropriate to the student's age and comply with health and safety and child protection legislation.
- Work Experience Placement Forms, available from the school website, must be completed by:
 - The student.
 - Parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - The employer/mentor.
- The completed forms must be returned to the TY Coordinator by the specified deadline before the placement can commence.

Insurance

- Students on approved work experience placements are covered under the school's insurance policy.
- This insurance only applies to work experience placements in the Republic of Ireland.
- A hard copy insurance form will be provided to students and must be given to the employer/mentor prior to the placement where requested.
- Certain types of work may not be covered by insurance; students will be informed if a proposed placement is deemed unsuitable.

Garda Vetting

- Garda Vetting is a mandatory background check for individuals working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults in Ireland, conducted by the National Vetting Bureau.
- Students can only be Garda Vetted once they have reached 16 years of age.
- Students wishing to be Garda Vetted go to the Deputy Principal to begin the process using the appropriate forms and online forms.
- Please note that the vetting process can take up to 6 weeks to complete.
- See Appendix 7 for the procedures and steps to complete Garda Vetting.

Attendance and Absences

- Attendance at work experience is mandatory once a placement is approved.
- Attendance will be verified by the employer/mentor.
- In the event of illness or unavoidable absence, the student must:
 - Inform the school and the employer/mentor as soon as possible
 - Provide a written explanation or medical certification where appropriate
- Employers are requested to contact the school if a student fails to attend without notice.
- Where students are taking part in a Work Experience Block placement outside of the usual Friday slot, they should use the school attendance feature to notify the school office of their absence.

Payment

Employers/mentors are not expected to pay students during work experience placements.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- A member of school staff may contact the employer during the placement.
- Students are required and responsible to:
 - Keep a record or diary of their work experience (appendix 3)
 - Complete a reflection and evaluation following each placement (appendix 3)
 - Parents will be asked to sign a weekly attendance sheet (appendix 1)
- Employers/mentors will be asked to sign a weekly attendance sheet (appendix 1) and a brief evaluation form at the end of each placement. (appendix 2)

Health and Safety

- While students are on work experience, the employer/mentor has responsibility for their day-to-day health, safety and welfare, though they are also covered by the school's insurance.
- Employers must ensure that work assigned is suitable for young people and complies with the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996.
- Students must not undertake tasks requiring specialist training unless such training has been provided.
- Any accidents or incidents must be reported immediately to the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Responsibilities

- Approve all work experience placements
- Provide necessary documentation and insurance details
- Prepare students in advance regarding expectations, behaviour and safety
- Address any issues or concerns arising during placements

Student Responsibilities

- Secure an appropriate placement and submit required documentation on time
- Abide by the rules, regulations and working hours of the employer
- Act as ambassadors for Blackrock ETSS and adhere to the School Code of Behaviour
- Take responsibility for their own safety and conduct
- Complete all required reflections and evaluations

Employer Responsibilities

- Provide a safe and supportive working environment
- Supervise the student appropriately
- Notify the school of any concerns or incidents
- Complete an evaluation at the end of the placement

Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy was approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on 10th February 2026. The policy will be reviewed during the academic year 2030-2031, or earlier as required.

Appendix 1 – Record of Student Attendance

Blackrock ETSS 		
WORK EXPERIENCE RECORD OF ATTENDANCE		
Date	Employer's Signature	Signature of Parent
05-Sep-25		
12-Sep-25		
19-Sep-25		
26-Sep-25		
03-Oct-25		
10-Oct-25		
17-Oct-25		
24-Oct-25		
07-Nov-25		
14-Nov-25		
21-Nov-25		
28-Nov-25		
05-Dec-25		
12-Dec-25		
19-Dec-25		
09-Jan-26		
16-Jan-26		
23-Jan-26		
30-Jan-26		
06-Feb-26		
13-Feb-26		
27-Feb-26		
06-Mar-26		
13-Mar-26		
20-Mar-26		
27-Mar-26		
17-Apr-26		
24-Apr-26		
01-May-26		
08-May-26		
15-May-26		
22-May-26		
29-May-26		

Appendix 2 – Employer's Report Form



Blackrock ETSS

Transition Year Form – Employer's Report on Work Experience

(To be completed by the person under whose direction the student is placed)

Name of Student:

Dates of Placement:

Name of Employer Offering Work Experience Placement:

Location of Employer Offering Work Experience Placement:

Please rate the student under the following headings:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Rating	Comment			
Punctuality					
Relationship with fellow workers					
Attitude towards work placement					

Any other comments or feedback on students work experience placement?



Supervisor's Signature:



Date / Dáta:

Appendix 3 – Student Reflection & Evaluation

Reflection on

WORK EXPERIENCE

/ CAREER EXPLORATION



 COMPANY:

 ROLE:

 START DATE:

 END DATE:

 RATING:      

 Record your work experience dates and tasks undertaken in the table below.

DATE	TASKS UNDERTAKEN

Describe your role(s) in this work experience placement.

Describe how you secured this work experience placement.

What did you enjoy least about this work experience placement? Why?

Did your experience live up to your expectations? Why/Why not?

Describe the biggest challenge you faced during this placement and how you overcame it.

How has this work experience placement affected your thoughts on your career path for the future?

How would you rate your own level of participation during this work experience placement?

Appendix 4 – Sample Letters to Potential Placement Employers

Subject: Transition Year Work Experience Opportunity - Every Friday

Dear [Employer's Name],

My name is [Your Full Name], and I am currently a Transition Year student at Blackrock ETSS. I am writing to express my interest in gaining work experience at [Company Name] as part of my school's Transition Year program.

I am particularly interested in your company because *[briefly explain why – e.g., “I admire the work you do in the area of environmental sustainability,” or “I am keen to learn more about the field of graphic design and was impressed by your recent projects”]*. I believe that spending time at your company would provide me with valuable insights and help me develop important skills for the future.

The work experience is scheduled to take place every Friday, and I would be very grateful for the opportunity to be considered for a placement.

Please let me know if there are any forms or documents you require from me or my school. I am happy to provide further details or attend an informal meeting at your convenience.

Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to the possibility of hearing from you.

Best regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Your School Email Address] _

Appendix 5 – Employer’s Cover Letter from School



A chara,

I write to you regarding the Blackrock Educate Together Work Experience Programme 2025-2026.

Each student who is enrolled in Transition Year in Blackrock ETSS must engage with the *Blackrock ETSS Work Experience Programme*. This sees students sourcing work experience placements for each Friday throughout the school year. Students may volunteer in the same workplace throughout the year, or seek different placements for different times of the year.

We would be most obliged if you could lend your help and support to the scheme – without workplaces and employers offering placements and their experience, there can be no programme. We hope our students can contribute to your workplace in an enthusiastic and thoughtful way, and that it is mutually beneficial for both student and employer.

No payment is expected or necessary as it is considered part of the student’s education in Transition Year.

There is a progress report which we would ask employers to complete at the end of each student’s placement so that we can monitor and assess a student’s progress and efforts. We might also contact the employer on occasion to check in on students and their engagement with their employer.

Should you experience any difficulty during the placement, please do not hesitate to contact me at Blackrock ETSS.

Best regards,

Terry Halpin.

Transition Year Coordinator.

Blackrock Educate Together Secondary School
Tully Park
Cherrywood
Dublin 18
D18 XD2V
Roll No. 68387K

Telephone: 01-9120440
Email: office@blackrocketss.ie
Website: www.blackrocketss.ie
Charity No. 20206294 Principal:
Donal Evoy
Deputy Principal: Simon Rogers

Appendix 6 – Sample CV for Students

[Your Full Name]

Date of Birth: [DD/MM/YYYY]

Address: [School Full Postal Address]

Phone: [School Phone Number]

Email: [Your School Email Address]

Education

Current Secondary School Name

Year: Transition Year (2025–2026)

Junior Certificate Mock Results (2025):

- Irish: [Result] -
- English: [Result]
- Maths: [Result]
- [Other Subjects + Results]

Primary School Name

Years Attended: [e.g. 2015–2023]

Work Experience

Business/Organisation Name – [Role or Task Performed]

Dates: [Month/Year]

- [Brief description of what you did]

S.H.A.R.E. (Volunteering)

Dates: [Month/Year]

- Participated in charity work supporting elderly communities.

Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Basic First Aid Training (if applicable)
- Good communication and teamwork skills
- Reliable and hardworking
- Comfortable using computers and tablets
- Organised and willing to learn

Interests

- Member of [Sport Club or School Team]
- Hobbies include [e.g. reading, coding, art, photography]
- Part of [School Club or Organisation]

Awards, Achievements & Projects

- Received [Award Name] for [achievement]
- Completed [School Project or Competition]
- [Other recognition, certificates or milestones]

References

Teacher's Name – [Subject or Role]

School: [School Name]

Phone: [School Phone Number]

Email: [School office Email Address]

Club Coach/Volunteer Supervisor/Work Experience Contact

Name: [Referee's Name]

Position: [Their Role/Relationship to You]

Phone: [Phone Number]

Email: [Email Address]

(Always ask permission before listing someone as a reference)

Appendix 7 -Garda Vetting Steps

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Action Required By:</u>	<u>Action Required</u>
1	Parent/Guardian and Student	1. Parent/Guardian completes JMB* Vetting Validation Form. (see website) 2. Student returns JMB Vetting Validation Form to the Deputy Principal and discusses the role for which they are being vetted (e.g. Student placement in a hospital setting, student placement in a crèche etc.)
2	School & Guardian	1. The school will then generate a Vetting Invitation form – this will arrive to the parent/guardian’s email account. 2. Parent/Guardian completes the online form on the JMB online portal using the details contained within the email received. 3. When the form has been completed, the family inform the Deputy Principal. The school will then ensure the document is submitted to the JMB for final vetting.
3	JMB	JMB will complete the Garda Vetting process
4	JMB	JMB sends the vetting disclosure to the school.
5	School	The school will print two copies of the vetting disclosure, retain one copy in school files, and give a hard copy to the student.
6	Parent & Student	Student gives a copy of the vetting declaration to their place of employment.

*JMB – Joint Managerial Board. They are a recognised management body for voluntary secondary schools.