



Donabate CC Guidance Newsletter

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So...What Just Happened?

**It was all sorted. 6 years in the making. As reliable as the seasons.
The Leaving Cert 2020 was happening.
Until it wasn't.**



Today is Wednesday.

Ms. Peat would have '21 days to the Leaving Cert' on her board, Ms. Whelan and I would be running around the 6th year classes checking in, making hurried announcements, making sure forms were filled in, CAOs complete. The Debs committee would probably be making last minute arrangements, the Yearbook committee would be frantically doing a final proofread. Chances are, with only a few weeks left of term, the school would be filled with the nervous sounds of 6th year students reluctantly practising their Graduation song in preparation for the big night.

And now that has changed.

You may be one of the students who is delighted, it's all over! You finally feel like you again!

Maybe you are still overwhelmed, confused...maybe it all feels a bit anticlimactic?

We can't always control change, but can learn how to manage our feelings about it.

Change can be exciting, but often feels daunting or exhausting. No matter what we feel about the new Leaving Certificate arrangements, this change can't be avoided.

When we're struggling, often the problem isn't the change itself, but how we deal with it. We can't always control change, but can learn how to manage our feelings about it.

Welcoming change into our lives

For us to arrive at something 'new', we must first give up something 'old'. It's OK to have mixed emotions in these cases, feeling fear and excitement as much as sadness and happiness. To feel confused means that things are different than you planned. To feel disappointed means that maybe, maybe we miss our school.

Being able to talk about and share our range of emotions can be helpful. Take time to acknowledge what you're leaving behind.



Dealing with change we don't choose

Unfortunately, we all experience unwelcome changes in our lives and as a year group you have been faced with very big changes that are outside of your control.

When a change happens suddenly or unexpectedly, it's not unusual to feel shock or grief. Confusion about what has happened can cause us to take a while to wrap our heads around it. Give yourself time to come to terms with the change. Reach out and talk to people around you about how you are feeling.

How you can deal with the change ahead:

Are there any positives in the situation? Focus on the positive impacts no matter how small they may seem. Try to shift your attention from the negatives.

Picture someone else in your shoes. What would you say to them, what would you advise?

Try to look to the future. Bear in mind, even if you don't agree, there will likely come a time where you grow to accept it. Remind yourself of something you may have been dreading in the past and how that panned out. Uncertainty can often add feelings of anxiety. So, while the lead up to the change can be difficult, once it actually happens you can begin to deal with it and it becomes easier with time.

I know a lot of you still have a lot of questions about how exactly predicted grades will work, what will happen to course points, how it will all work. Maybe you still aren't sure what you want to do next year. Do know this. You are an important part of our school community. You are valued and you contributed. From the student council to the detention list (!), we as a staff will miss you. You challenged us, you made us smile.

You are DCC.

The following websites have up to date and relevant mental health support should you need it:

www.pietahouse.ie

www.jigsaw.ie

www.mentalhealthireland.ie

Remember to reach out to your One Good Adult if you're feeling overwhelmed.

If you need us, please email us. We're always here.

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