

Guidance Plan



Coláiste Cois Life
Gleann an Ghrifín
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1.1 Opening Statement

Coláiste Cois Life guidance plan is a description of the school's guidance program and details how the guidance needs of students are addressed. It is an integral part of the school's development plan. In Coláiste Cois Life the guidance plan is seen as an activity for the whole school and every member of the staff and the school community is involved in implementing the policy.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Guidance Policy

The aim of the guidance and counselling policy is to help students to understand and accept their own talents and abilities as well as to understand the challenge of living and learning.

-Help students research possibilities and opportunities; become more independent and take responsibility for themselves.

-To support students to make choices about life and to carry out those choices.

-Empower students to make personal, educational and career decisions.

-Develop strategies to deal with the difficulties they have now or will have in the future.

The guidance counsellor together with the school staff, the Board of Management, the students, and the parents will participate in the promotion of this blueprint in the school.

1.3 Scope

Guidance in Coláiste Cois Life refers to what is provided in the student development process. These experiences help students develop self-management skills that will help them make effective choices and decisions in their lives.

Counselling is an integral part of the school's guidance programme and is offered as part of a developmental learning process, and also at times of personal crisis. Counselling includes personal counselling, educational counselling and career counselling.

The plan addresses the guidance needs of all students at all levels in the school. Because guidance applies to the whole school, the plan involves the management and staff of the school in general.

Coláiste Cois Life believes that there is a close connection between the aims and objectives of the guidance policy and the general aims of the school.

Since the establishment of the school there has been a great emphasis on the pastoral care of the students and the personal, social and intellectual progress of the students as set out in the aims of the school.

We try to develop the whole personality of the student, to understand the right to freedom, to self-discipline and to have empathy with others.

We show in the education we provide that it is more important to us than exam results that each student reaches the peak of his/her own abilities in an experienced, friendly environment and that he/she is not only on the side of academic subjects in school but also has access to other aspects of education that are important for human development e.g. drama, sport, music, debate etc.

We understand how important it is that parents participate with us in promoting these values at school, at home and in life.

1.4 Definition of guidance

Guidance is used to describe the range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence designed to help students make choices about their lives and the transitions based on those choices. The guidance program is the full range of activities through which the school addresses the students' needs. The guidance and counseling service at Coláiste Cois Life is here to support students to develop a realistic and balanced awareness and to accept their talents and abilities. This includes three main areas - personal and social, educational and career guidance.

1.4.1 The role of the guidance counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor is a fully qualified teacher with a postgraduate qualification in Guidance Counselling, which gives them unique skills to address the academic, career and social/emotional development needs of the students by designing and implementing a comprehensive whole school counselling programme. implementation that sustains and improves students' well-being and success. The role of the Guidance Counsellor within the school is to provide support to the students through personal, educational and professional counselling to support them to become productive, well-adjusted young people. The Guidance Counsellor works closely with the whole school community to provide this support and to ensure that best practice is adhered to.

1.4.2 Personal and social guidance

Personal and Social Counselling is an integral part of the school guidance program. It is mostly

offered on an individual basis and when necessary and/or appropriate it may be offered on a group/birth basis. It aims to help students explore their feelings, thoughts and behaviour, caring and supporting students who are learning how to manage different challenges and events as individuals who are growing and developing. Great emphasis is placed on improving pupils' self-confidence. An interdisciplinary approach is taken to address the concerns and needs of individuals, and a wide range of resources are used. A Restorative approach will be favoured in dealing with any conflicts that arise. Teaching and support personnel from several departments, in particular; The management, heads of year and class teachers can collaborate and liaise with the students' families to achieve this objective. The Guidance Department may contact external agencies, GPs, and other local support services if this is deemed to be the best support for students.

3. Education Guidance

The Education Guidance is a form of development, starting with the transition of pupils to secondary school from primary school. Educational guidance includes empowering students in the areas of subject choice, study skills and examination techniques, and possibly collaborating with parents on related subjects. It is recognized that the expertise of the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) coordinator and the other staff members is extremely valuable in this area and the Guidance Counsellor will make use of this expertise to ensure that the full needs of the students are met. Parents' knowledge of their children's strengths and talents is also recognized and valued. Some examples of educational guidance include:

- Psychometric Testing
- Study skills and examination techniques
- Counselling for learning difficulties and all COROB.
- Teacher/parent/student consultations, report formation
- Assessment using Psychometric Tools and Inventories (eg: CAT4))
- Motivation
- Choices: subjects, levels, courses, careers

1.4.4 Career Guidance is about enabling students to recognize their talents and abilities, and their potential to improve skills, enabling them to make informed choices and take responsibility for their future and their careers life itself. Examples of areas covered:

- Careers/employment opportunity information management

- Develop self-awareness
- CAO applications
- FETAC options/routes to further education
- UCAS/Europe/USA applications
- Attend career events and open days
- Personal career guidance meetings
- Organise career talks in collaboration with professionals, college and university personnel, parents and current alumni
- Decision-making skills and planning skills
- Job search skills/interview techniques/CV preparation
- Work experience, especially during the Transition Year
- Utilize relevant IT and online resources, including Qualifax, Careers Portal, CAO website, college and University websites, apprenticeship websites, amongst many others.

1.5 Links to other Policies

It is recognized that there is a strong link between the blueprint and other school policies for example:

Child Protection Policy
 Critical Incident Policy
 Code of Behaviour
 Anti-Bullying Policy.
 Pastoral Care Policy
 Additional Education Needs Policy

Part 2: The Guidance Curriculum:

The Guidance Curriculum is provided both formally and informally.

2.1 Formal Guidance:

The Formal Guidance curriculum is delivered through individual meetings which include personal counselling, educational guidance and vocational/career guidance. It uses several methodologies:

- Counselling
- Psychometric testing
- Interest inventories
- Referrals
- A guide for the classroom in the senior cycle

2.2 Informal Guidance

The Informal Guidance curriculum consists of teaching SPHE/Wellness, liaising with other teaching and management staff to foster cross-curricular links and to contribute to the development of a whole school policy on the delivery of Guidance. Meetings and communication with parents/guardians, external agencies and local support services are also an integral part of informal guidance.

Guidance Program

Junior cycle classes:

The guidance counsellor meets all classes in Year 1 to provide support as they begin secondary school education. The student has the chance to talk about any difficulties with new subjects or settling in.

In the Health Education and OSSP classes attention is paid to the social aspects, research skills and personal values.

The different study skills are discussed at the beginning of Year 3. Pupils are given guidance on how to work out a study timetable for themselves and how to focus on the Junior Certificate.

There is a study skills workshop for 1st, 3rd and 5th.

Transition year:

All students in 4th Year have one guidance class per week.

The students do work experience and voluntary work in Year 4. The students are prepared in the classes for work experience and voluntary work. After returning from the workplaces they discuss the experience and the benefits they have gained from it.

They are also given information on the different third level Colleges. The students learn how to contact an information service related to careers in universities, technology colleges, FÁS, and colleges abroad. The school computers are used to speed up this process. Careers Portal and REACH+ are also used in classes.

The students get the chance to research the profession they are interested in by doing a comprehensive initiative over a few months. Part of this initiative is in the exhibitions on Transition Year's Graduation.

During the Transition Year, the students take the DATS exam, to analyze their specific talents. When these results come back, the guidance counsellor interviews each student individually to discuss the results and inform them of the subject choices and their connection to future study or work. The school management also organizes an information night for the parents regarding the choice of subjects for 5th Year.

The SPHE and RSE courses are also covered in the classes.

5th Year:

A guidance class takes place every week in 5th year. In this class the students receive training on the value of work. Paid and unpaid work is discussed. Research is done on a working day in the different professions. The CAO and UCAS system is explained to them and the Internet is used to find out about the various courses and to check the program in the courses in which they are interested.

The students are given a questionnaire to fill out to find out how much they have done in terms of researching the careers they are interested in.

They get help with a letter of application for a job in the Summer and with putting together a CV. Pupils' interests are tested with a specific source. They also attend Higher Options.

Careers Portal and REACH+ are also used in classes.

The SPHE and RSE courses are also covered in the classes.

6th Year:

At the beginning of the year an explanation is given again about the CAO and UCAS. It is spoken with them about the PLC universities and colleges. The students are allowed to attend Higher Options. Each student gets the chance to speak with the guidance counsellor at least once to discuss the CAO option.

The guidance class is used to bring in speakers to talk about the different faculties in the universities, other third level colleges and further education colleges. Speakers come from the various professions to describe the aspects that go with that job.

Letters of recommendation are provided for students hoping to go to colleges abroad. There is practice in putting together a CV, a letter of application and an informal mock interview. Students who have problems with study pressure are worked with to put together a personal study timetable.

DARE and scholarship applications are made with students.

The SPHE and OCG courses are also covered in the classes.

An information night about the CAO for parents and guardians.

Guidance Resources

Information leaflets from colleges and universities about courses.

The computers, internet sites.

Information booklets, CD's, DVD's.

The REACH + program.

Open days and information days, day seminars.

The lecture hall.

Career guidance night.

Work experience.

Volunteer work.

Room / office.

In conjunction with parents/guardians, referral can be recommended for students by professionals outside the school or by the school's NEPS psychologist as appropriate.

Monitoring the Plan

This plan will be regularly reviewed.

School Counselling Service

A School Counsellor is available to guide and advise students who need it by contacting him/her and making an appointment.

Record keeping

Record keeping is an integral part of the administration of the guidance and counselling service. Guidance Counselling record counselling sessions and vocational guidance interviews. Notes are stored in secure filing cabinets in the guidance office or digitally under an encrypted document. Appropriate coding of information will take place to protect the student. Referrals to the DLP are stored securely in the Principal's office.

Record keeping involves:

- Keeping student records for a minimum of 7 years.
- The detailed records of personal counselling sessions should contain some of the actual words and phrases used by the client.
- To ensure accuracy the Counsellor should try to write up notes as soon as possible after the session.
- Keeping notes as brief as possible.
- Only facts are collected not opinions

Confidentiality

A professional relationship involving confidentiality is at the core of the Counselling Service in the School. The Counsellor will take reasonable care to ensure that consultations with students, parents and other professionals will take place in an appropriately private environment, especially in one-to-one consultations. Confidentiality for students must be respected unless there is clear and immediate danger to the student or to others. Hence, confidentiality of the student will be respected provided it is in the best interest of the student and that no other party will be endangered by it and all legal requirements are met. However, confidentiality will not be guaranteed in the following circumstances:

- when a student poses a danger to themselves or others
- when a student discloses an intention to commit a crime

- when the counsellor suspects abuse or neglect
- when a court orders a counsellor to make records available
- in the case of abuse (Child Protection Guidelines definition applies here)

All students are informed of the protocols surrounding confidentiality at their first meeting or prior to their first meeting. Written and Oral reports will contain only such data as are pertinent to the case, and every effort will be made to avoid undue invasion of the student's privacy. Management (Designated Liaison Person) and/or Parents are informed if the student is posing a danger to him/ herself and / or to others.

Referral

Assistance for students will be sought from other qualified professionals outside the school, for areas of concern such as learning difficulties, substance abuse, bereavement, where appropriate School personnel considers necessary and appropriate. The Guidance Counsellor will supply all relevant information and seek the relevant permission from school authorities and parents or guardians. Teachers, school management and parents may refer students to the Guidance Counsellor. Clear procedures of referral (below), which have been agreed between the Principal, Staff, Parents and the Guidance Counsellor will be followed. Some strategies that can be used include – Informing parents, staff and students as to the procedures for student referral both inside and outside the school.

Referrals In - Student (self-referral) / Class teacher / Year Head / Chaplain / Guidance Counsellor / Management/ Parents / Staff / Caretakers / Secretaries / Other Students / Curriculum / Piece of Writing and Emergencies

Referrals Out -External Counsellor / CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)/ Social Services / NEPS/ SENO / Túsla / Doctors/ Garda Síochana/ Disability/ Access Officers in various Institutions

Other agencies

NEPS Psychological Services

Social Workers

Doctors

CAMHS

Jigsaw

Pieta House

Body Whys

Employers

SENO

Túsla

Colleges/Admission Officers and Access Officers

Solas

Defence Forces

Gardaí

Department of Education (RACE)

State Examinations Commission (SEC)

CAO, PLC, "HEAR" "DARE" ETB and UCAS

Sínithe: _____

Dáta: _____

Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bhainistíochta

Sínithe: _____

Dáta: _____

Rúnaí an Bhoird & Príomhoide na Scoile