



Castletroy College Whole School Guidance Plan

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Planning Committee Members;

Aedin O' Leary (Guidance Counsellor),
Donal O' Riordan (Guidance Counsellor)
Trevor Griffin (Guidance Counsellor)

Completed in consultation with RE coordinator, School Chaplain, SPHE coordinator, Policy Development coordinator and senior management .

Aim of Guidance Service

The aim of the Guidance service is to facilitate every student to achieve their potential in a holistic way in line with our school ethos and the Whole School Development Plan. It encompasses educational guidance, social and personal guidance and career and vocational guidance.

Educational Guidance

- This refers to facilitating the student to benefit in all ways from the teaching and learning ongoing in the school. Specifically, it includes areas such as study skills, subject choice, subject levels and specific educational programmes offered in the school. It also facilitates decision-making regarding third-level education.

Social and Personal Guidance

- This refers to supporting students with personal and social issues that arise which may adversely affect their ability to function in school. It operates within the Pastoral Care structures and policy of the school with due regard to the emotional well being of our students.

Career and Vocational Guidance

- This refers to helping the students understand the process of career choice and to develop their capacities to determine and execute career decisions. It helps students to clarify their own skills, abilities, interests and values, to understand the range of opportunities available to them and to plan and execute a strategy to achieve their career goals. Facilitating decision making regarding third level is a focal point of the work covered in this area.

- **Guidance in the Whole School Context**

The Guidance Plan needs to be seen in conjunction with many other school policies and specifically with those listed below which when integrated with it, provide a holistic Guidance Service to all our students.

1. Children First National Guidelines 2019
2. Pastoral Care Policy
3. Additional Educational Needs Policy
4. Code of Behaviour
5. Anti - Bullying Policy
6. Homework Policy
7. Student Pregnancy Support Policy
8. Student Support Team Procedures
9. Substance Abuse Policy
10. Chaplaincy Policy
11. Intercultural and EAL Policy
12. Exceptionally Able/Gifted Students Policy
13. School Wellbeing Policy
14. Critical Incident Response NEPs Guidelines 2021

In providing a comprehensive service to students the Guidance Counsellors when necessary meet and work with representatives of the following outside agencies.

- Tusla
- Education and Welfare Officer
- Student Support Worker (Pregnancy & Parenting Issues)
- National Educational Psychological Service NEPS
- Special Educational Needs Officer
- Social Workers from Tusla
- Psychologists and other staff from CAMHs East Limerick Services
- Children and Grief Service
- Pieta House
- Jigsaw
- Limerick Social Services
- National Learning Network

All staff members have a role to play in the delivery of appropriate guidance within the school as subject teachers, tutors, coaches and leaders in extra curricular activities.

However, the following have been identified as having a more specific role: Guidance Counsellors, Year Heads, Deputy Principals in Particular the DP with responsibility for Pastoral Care, Student Support Team, AEN Co-ordinator, LCVP Coordinator and Programmes Coordinator and the Chaplain.

The Guidance Counsellor from time to time and will give input to a staff meeting regarding Guidance related issues e.g. students “at risk”, Past Pupil Surveys, Student Support Team issues, International Students e.t.c. This is done in consultation with the school Principal and year heads

To facilitate input from all staff into the Guidance service a communication system has been developed within the pastoral care context. Central to this is our “Referral System” which operates as follows:

1. When a teacher has a concern regarding a student they refer to Year Head – who may then check in with the student and/or check-in with home (parent/guardian, as appropriate). The student will be discussed at the next pastoral care meeting, and the student may be referred on to the Guidance Counsellor and/or Student Support Team.

or

2. The teacher approaches the Guidance Counsellor directly who then checks in with Year Head and student if appropriate. The Student may be referred to Deputy Principal or Principal who may then refer on to TUSLA in accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015. The Children First Act 2015

Procedure to follow upon a Direct/ First Person Disclosure of

- Abuse- Physical/sexual - immediate referral to DLP or DDLP in case of DLP's absence
- Pregnancy Concerns
- Suicide intent/ suicide ideation
- Self-harm/Eating disorders
- Sexual Identity (if issue is of immediate, critical concern)

Student/family to be met where appropriate. Matter may be dealt with by the GC or referred on as appropriate within the pastoral care system in the school or to relevant outside agencies with family support if appropriate.

Indirect/Third Party Disclosures

- Third party disclosure in any case outside of sexual abuse, which is a direct CPR, of any of the above themes/bullying issues/other.
- Account of issue required of 3rd party by staff member
- This account to be copied to the relevant year head/ P or DP, who will follow up as appropriate.

Bereavement/ Separation/Loss

- Student to be offered bereavement support by Chaplain

Figure 6: Indicators of wellbeing

Junior Cycle and Guidance

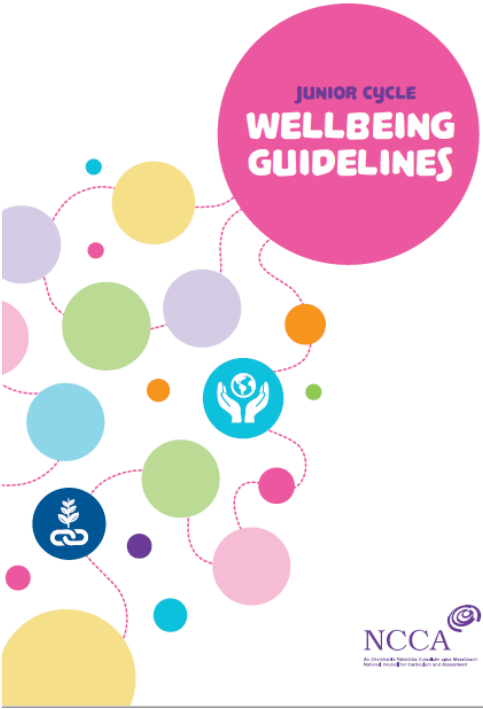


Guidance in schools refers to: A range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked, areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance.

Under the Education Act, Section 9C (1998) section 60, schools are required to provide students with access to appropriate guidance to assist them with their educational and career choices. The Framework for Junior Cycle states that guidance provision may be included in the hours available for wellbeing 'in recognition of the unique contribution that guidance can make to the promotion of students' wellbeing'.

The Circular Letter entitled Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle states that the school's junior cycle programme 'must include guidance education'.

Schools are best placed to decide how they can include guidance in their junior cycle Wellbeing programme. We have made provision in a variety of ways: through shorter units and/or as part of related subjects. This encompasses the three separate but interlinked areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance. It is implemented in a collaborative way to best meet the needs of students. For example, other teachers are responsible for transition-related learning in the first term of first year. A continuum model of support is applied to the school's guidance programme in junior cycle. In applying the continuum, the guidance programme can meet the needs of students through whole-class teaching and learning, smaller groups and one-to-one sessions with individual students who require particular support. The Guidance Counsellors focus on the role of the school guidance programme in supporting the wellbeing of all students in junior cycle. (NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines pg 48)



Transition Year Guidance Programme

Allocation: one period a week (40mins)

Aims:

Introduce students to the idea of Career Guidance as a dual process of Self Exploration and Opportunity Exploration and to facilitate both.

Objectives:

Students will

- Be familiar with the main options after Second Level Education
- Be familiar with entry routes to Third Level Education
- Be familiar with a wide range of career areas
- Have done in depth research into a career area of their choice
- Will know how to access Career and related Guidance Information.
- Students will have developed their research and presentation skills.
- Students will have learned how to complete a CV.

Context:

Students follow the **REACH+ Programme** which covers the following areas

Interest Inventories

Subject Choice for Senior Cycle

Options after second level- employment, Apprenticeships, I.T.'s and Universities

Minimum Entry Requirements

Compulsory Entry Requirements

The Points System.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Speaker in – TUS & UL

Use of ICT

Use of REACH+ Student Handbook and online programme.

Resources

Reach +, Internet, Guest Speakers, College Prospectus, Handouts

Junior Health Sciences Academy Health Careers Event 2024

Various LCETB TY Career Events e.g, The Barrista Programme

Assessment

600 word Career Investigation Project to be handed up to the Guidance Counsellor. Presentation of project to class. Marks for the project are evenly split between content and presentation. Credits to be placed on their end of year report.

Evaluation

Students should be confident in their subject choice for Fifth Year. They also should be able to discuss their future career options with basic knowledge of their career/course requirements and the process involved in realising same.

Guidance programme for TYs

Month	Topic	Learning Intention We are learning to.....
September	Introduction/Overview of Year – What is Career Guidance? Follow the Reach + Programme	Understand the term ‘Career Guidance’ Complete an interest inventory Identify our career interests Understand how qualifications are categorised
October	Complete Self assessment part of Reach + programme	Develop a greater understanding of ourselves, our values, personality and influences -
November	Prep for Work Experience Feedback from Work Experience	Reflect and evaluate from our Work Experience.
December	CAT 4 Testing	Complete an aptitude test to identify our strengths and weaknesses, to help us to decide our Option Subjects in Senior Cycle
January	Guest Speakers UL and TUS CAT 4 results given to students.	Identify our strengths and weaknesses in relation to future careers and subject choices.
February	Subject choice booklet Career Research project begins	Analyse information Improving our research skills
March	Researching careers	Improve our communication skills by listening and asking questions

	Part of the Career research project is interviewing an adult who works in the area.	Enhance our research skills using career related websites. we will understand appropriate interactions with adults in this context.
April	Present the Research Project to the class.	Develop our public speaking skills
May	Curriculum Vitae Sample Discuss importance of CV Type CV Type CV Evaluation of learning	Understand why a CV is a necessary part of the World of Work Use IT skills to compose a CV Use IT skills to compose a CV Review the information learned during the year and apply it to future career exploration.

5th Year Guidance programme

Month	Topic	Learning Intention We are learning to....
September	Overview of programme Rothwell Miller Interest Inventory Scoring and explanation of career areas National Qualifications Framework Entry requirements for colleges, points Careers Exhibition Preparation	Identify our interests and apply them to our career exploration Recognise that all courses are placed on a framework and the requirements to enter these courses. Be ready for a visit to a Careers Exhibition.
October	Evaluate Careers Exhibition Preparation for Limerick College's Open Days Introducing CVs. Read sample ones	Use our analysis skills to manage the information received at the careers exhibition. Plan and organise a visit to college open days. Understand the role of a cv and how it is structured.
November	Type up CV Type up CV Type up CV Corrections of CV and print copy	Use IT skills to compose a cv. Identify our skills and qualities. Use IT skills to compose a cv Use IT skills to compose a cv
December	Internet websites for careers and courses Begin research for careers investigation Career Investigation	Use our research skills Use our research skills Use our research skills
January	Career Investigation Career Investigation Career Investigation Career Investigation	Use IT skills to research a career Use IT skills to research a career Use IT skills to research a career Use IT skills to research a career

February	Work Experience Introduction Explain work pack and finalise arrangements	Understand the value of work experience Understand appropriate behaviour required for work experience
March	Evaluate work experience with class. Finish Career Investigation Powerpoint of certain careers and requirements ie FAS Teaching/business careers, courses	Evaluate our performance at work experience and any insight into future careers. Use IT skills to compose a career investigation. Manage information Understand suitable skills and qualities required for these courses.
April	Pharmaceutical/Sports Careers, Courses Science/Engineering Careers, Courses Medical/ Health Careers, Courses Information Session on UCAS and Eunicas Application Procedures	Understand suitable skills and qualities required for these courses. Informed of broader range of college courses available outside of Ireland
May*	*Visiting speakers may happen at any stage during the year.	Manage information provided by guest speakers and apply it to our own career decision making process.

GUIDANCE PROVISION

Outlined below is Guidance provision for our students on a Year Group by Year Group basis.

Note that Services provided by the Guidance Counsellors are in regular print and those provided on a whole school basis are in *italics*.

FIRST YEARS

Work of Guidance Counsellors

1. Attend Junior Pastoral Care meetings weekly.
2. Introduction class for all class groups in the run up to Christmas as preparation for exams and study skills (Link with SPHE) but also as a way of introducing the service to the students, explain confidentiality.
3. Return visit in May re Summer Exams.
4. Involvement in the administration and interpretation of standardised testing to check regarding special needs, resource provision and gifted students.

Whole School Guidance

- 1. Chaplain meets with all First Years in class groups and introduces her role and the role of the Guidance Counsellor to the students. Introduces the idea of a listening space in the school and collects family information, may evaluate in conjunction with the Student Support Team if concerned about a particular student from a pastoral point of view.*
- 2. Standardised testing (in Maths and English) for all first years is run in conjunction with the Special Needs Team in the first two weeks of September. CAT4, NGRT, BASS*
- 3. Significant Guidance done in First Year SPHE e.g. Friends, Bullying including cyberbullying, Theatre Groups etc.*

SECOND YEAR

Work of Guidance Counsellors

1. Attend Junior Pastoral Care weekly.

Whole School Guidance

Many Guidance related issues covered in S.P.H.E. classes throughout the year.

THIRD YEAR

Work of Guidance Counsellor

1. Attend Junior Pastoral Care Meeting on a weekly basis.
2. Class input regarding TY, done in conjunction with TY co-ordinator. Attendance at TY information Night.
3. Followed by class input from GC regarding programme and subject choice for Fifth Year.
4. Senior Cycle Option night for parents.
5. In May input for all students in conjunction with Deputy Principal re exam preparation and conduct during state exam.
6. Organisation of the senior cycle options fair
7. CAT 4 testing done for 3rd year students going into 5th year, return of results.
8. Uploading relevant information on online learning platform

Whole School Guidance

1. Subject teachers meet with Third Years re advice for Senior Cycle. A booklet which outlines all Senior Cycle Subjects and Levels is published on the 3rd year Google classroom as well as the school website. It is explained by the Guidance Counsellors at SPHE time before students make their subject options for Senior Cycle. Options/ Decision making skills covered in SPHE.

FOURTH YEAR

Work of Guidance Counsellor

1. Attend a Parent teacher meeting.
2. Attend Senior Cycle Pastoral Care meeting.
3. Timetabled for one Guidance class weekly
4. Reach+ Programme followed in class, see above.

Whole School Guidance

1. *IT module, many topics covered in TY assist in personal development, career exploration and senior cycle subject options.*
2. *Info re Careers Evening, Open Days and Work updated on the TY google classroom.*

FIFTH YEARS

Work of Guidance Counsellor

1. Attend Parent Teacher Meeting
2. Attend weekly Senior Pastoral Care Meeting.
3. Teach one period per week to all students.

Topics covered:

- CV Preparation
 - Career Investigation
 - Attendance at Careers Exhibition in University of Limerick Sports Arena.
 - Attendance at UL, Mary I and LIT Open Days – compulsory. Study Skills
4. Preparation for application to UCAS to begin in May.
 5. Guest speakers from faculties in UL including arts, Law, Business Studies, Nursing, Science, Engineering. Guest speakers from LIT Built Environment, University of Galway UG, Shannon College and UCC.
 6. Uploading relevant information on online learning platforms.

Whole School Guidance

1. Advice for students re Open Day's in non local colleges and universities.
2. LCVP Work Experience for one week.
3. LCVP Industry visit, Career Investigation, CV Preparation and guest speakers.

SIXTH YEAR

Work of Guidance Counsellor

1. Available to meet with students for Educational or Personal Counselling by request or referral throughout the year.
2. Available to meet with parents
3. Attend Senior Pastoral Care meetings.
4. Attend a Parent Teacher meeting.
5. Individual 40 minute Vocational Guidance Interview (VGI) for all students from September to Christmas as preparation for leaving school.
6. CAO night for parents.
7. DARE and HEAR information sessions.
8. UCAS and EUNICAS applications to be completed - educational reference done in conjunction with principal and deputy principals.
9. Follow up VGI if required.
10. Attendance at Mary I, UL, TUS Open Days.
11. From October to Christmas, guest speakers from UL, TUS UCC & UG
12. Christmas to May, FAS and FET College guest speakers.
13. Information re Grants and Access programmes.
14. Liaising with AEN team regarding Non-Curricular Language Subjects at exam time and also re DARE Forms
15. Uploading information on online learning platforms.
16. Study Skills

Whole School Guidance

1. Lifeskills Module – College Life and Living Away from Home.
2. Revision Plans/Programme
3. Exam Technique
4. Graduation Mass for 6th Year
5. Third Level Course Information.
6. Preparation of Educational Reference for UCAS Application
7. RSE programme

ONGOING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

Work of Guidance Counsellor

1. Liaise with subject teachers, Year Heads, SPHE Co-ordinator, and Special Needs Co-ordinator.
2. Homework/Motivation/Study
3. Subject Levels and Choice
4. Lifeskills module on “Life in College away from home”.
5. Student Support Team – weekly meeting. Supervision
6. Day of Leaving Certificate Results.
7. Day of CAO Offers.
8. Follow up Statistical Information on completed Leaving Cert Students.
9. Regular attendance at ICG Branch meetings on Tuesday afternoon 2-4 p.m.
10. Supervision for GC's five times a year. Tuesday afternoons 2-4 p.m.
11. Guidance Counsellors for Senior Cycle attend CAO Conference in November, Open Day for Guidance Counsellor in UL and TUS and a GC will attend UCC Guidance Counsellors Open Day. At least one Guidance Counsellor will attend the IGC AGM in March each year.

GUIDANCE FOR THE GIFTED STUDENT

Identification of the Gifted student can come to us through a number of routes as outlined in our school policy. As the Guidance Counsellor co-ordinates the standardised testing of all the First Year groups, receives and reviews the results in conjunction with the AEN co-ordinator, they have an awareness of students who may need additional support in their time in school as a gifted student.

For students who would be under the exceptionally able group of students in regard to academic performance their Guidance related issues include areas such as

- Subject choice
- Additional subjects to be taken outside of the normal timetable
- Additional standardised testing
- Applications to Universities outside of Ireland e.g. Oxbridge or the US

For students whose Giftedness is in the area of the Arts or Sports the Guidance Counsellor will work with the student in relation to

- Subject Choice
- Alternative Timetables
- Managing study and academic commitments relative to other Practice/ Training commitments that a student may have.
- Applications to universities abroad that offer scholarships or other specific programmes for Gifted students.

Close liaising with parents/guardians is required for the above.

The writing of recommendations/references for students in their application for Third Level as well as assisting the students in sourcing the programme that best suits the facilitation of their needs with regard to their particular Gift, is also part of that work.

It has been our experience here since Guidance began in the school in 2002 that above all else, flexibility in our approach, empathy and support in dealing with these students is what is required.

Whole School Guidance

- 1. Rechecks and Viewing of Exam Scripts*
- 2. Student Welfare*
- 3. Liasing with the Health Board re vulnerable students.*

ICT and Guidance

1. Most Guidance Classes are conducted in the ICT room or with Chromebooks to facilitate Career research, completion of CV's, Career Investigations and presentation of Career projects by TYs and online Career Interest Inventories.
2. We have set up, since 2017, a Guidance page on Google classroom which allows us to advertise all Guidance activities taking place both in the school and on a wider level throughout the country.
3. As both UCAS and CAO applications are all made online we encourage students to use college websites and other online platforms related to Guidance as much as possible.

PROPOSED AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

While recognising that the current Guidance allocation does not meet our school needs, the school plans to increase the hours of our third fully qualified Guidance Counsellor.

We have a wealthy resource in our location so close to the University of Limerick. Every year since 2012 one of our Guidance Counsellors is on a IGC/UL Liaison Committee with the University of Limerick, made up of faculty and admissions staff in UL and other Guidance Counsellors from Limerick to see how we can work in partnership to best serve the needs of our students.

Trauma Responsive Education Training

Members of the Guidance Department , together with the AEN co-ordinator and Deputy Principal have committed to attend Trauma Responsive Education training during the 2024 and 2025 academic years with the goal of becoming a Trauma Responsive School.

Guidance for Students in the HUB

With the introduction of a Hub in 2023-24 for students with ASD we recognise the need for some further training and upskilling in the area of post school destinations for these students as they may not want or be able to follow the more traditional routes of work, Further or Higher Education.

Monitoring and Review

As part of the School Self-Evaluation Process, Castletroy College will monitor, review and evaluate this policy on an ongoing basis to ensure legal compliance and the maintenance of best practices.

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This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 26/02/24

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____

Principal

Date of next review: January 2027