

Colaiste Phobal Roscrea Whole School Guidance Plan



Colaiste Phobal Roscrea - A Tipperary Education and Training Board School

Contents

Section 1 - Whole School Guidance Plan

- 1.1 Rationale for Plan
- 1.1 Mission Statement of Colaiste Phobal Roscre
- 1.2 Objective of Plan
- 1.3 Aims of Plan
- 1.4 Definition of Guidance – What is Guidance and Counselling in Schools?
- 1.5 The Guidance Counselling Service
- 1.6 Background to Plan
- 1.7 Models of Practice
- 1.8 Scope of Plan
- 1.10 Guidance Team
- 1.11 Aims of the Whole School Guidance Team
- 1.12 Guidance Plan – a Reflection of Teamwork

Section 2 Current Guidance Provision and Programme

- 2.1 Guidance Provision
- 2.2 Services provided by the Whole School Guidance team
- 2.3 Guidance Programme
- 2.4 Cross Curricular Dimension to Whole School Guidance Plan

Section 3 Guidance Principles

- 3.1 Accountability
- 3.2 Consultation
- 3.3 Counselling – Description, Individual and Group
- 3.4 Multicultural Guidance Counselling
- 3.5 Ethical Requirements
- 3.6 Record Keeping
- 3.7 Information
- 3.8 Literacy, Numeracy and Assessment

Section 4 Policies and Procedures

- 4.1 Policies (connected school/DES policies)
- 4.2 Related Procedures

Section 5 Current Resources

Section 6 Developmental Areas 2016-2018

Section 7 Monitoring, Evaluation and review of Whole School Guidance

Rationale for Plan

Education Act, 1998

This School Guidance Policy reflects the ethos and spirit of Colaiste Phobal Roscre and it has been devised and developed in accordance with Section 9 of the Education Act 1998. Section 9(c) of that act states that a school “shall use its available resources to ... ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.” Section 9(d) elaborates further by stating that a school “shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students ... in consultation with their parents having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.”

Mission Statement of Colaiste Phobal Roscre

The ethos and spirit of Colaiste Phobal Roscre is embodied in our Mission Statement and is at the heart of this Guidance Plan. The mission statement is committed to

- Recognising the worth of the whole individual
- Educating students in a caring environment
- Promoting our cultural heritage
- Preparing our students for a meaningful and spiritual life
- Contributing to the life of the whole community.

Objective of Plan

To ensure the effective supervision of the Whole School Guidance programme and to ensure that the students of Colaiste Phobal Roscrea have access to guidance, that is appropriate to their needs, stage of development, and their school programme. This policy will set out current provision and programmes, and identify priority areas for development, and specify the evaluation and review mechanisms which operate in Colaiste Phobal Roscre in relation to this Whole School Guidance Plan.

Aims of Plan

- To promote the development and growth of each student on a personal, social, educational and career basis.
- To ensure that guidance initiatives and programmes in Colaiste Phobal are delivered in a developmental sequence that is relevant and appropriate to all students.
- To provide a framework for the delivery of guidance programmes within our school and in a manner that takes account of the diverse and particular needs of students with special educational needs, students of all ability levels and students from different backgrounds and cultures, up to and including Post Leaving Certificate students.

Definition of Guidance - What is Guidance and Counselling in schools?

Guidance and Counselling refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students in making choices about their lives and to help students in making transitions based on these choices.

The Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act, 1998 identify Guidance and Counselling as a single process that “aims to help students to develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities, to explore possibilities and opportunities; to grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves, to make informed choices about their lives and to follow through on those choices.” (Pages 4, 5)

These choices may be categorized into three distinct but interlinked areas: (i) Personal and Social, (ii) Educational and (iii) Vocational. The **Personal and Social** area encompasses developmental skills crucial to the students’ education and career eg. self awareness, decision making skilling, planning and coping strategies and skills. The **Educational** area is developmental and would include areas such as subject/course choice, subject level, motivation and learning, study skills, learning related problems and psychometric testing. The **Vocational** area includes areas such as employment rights and opportunities, vocational education and training, further education, job and interview preparation, career research and course information.

Counselling - The Department of Education's guidelines state that "counselling in schools may include personal, educational, career counselling, or combinations of these." The Guidance Counselling Service in Colaiste Phobal Roscre aims to provide a counselling environment which is both caring and non-judgemental on a one to one or group basis. This would aim to help students in areas such as (1) Decision making, (2) Problem solving, (3) Changing or modifying behaviours, (4) Making meaningful changes in their lives. Counselling is aimed at facilitating students in a holistic manner to realistically appraise their abilities, aptitudes and interests in order to make appropriate life choices and achieve personal happiness.

The Guidance Counselling Service

The Guidance Counselling Service is seen as having a central role to play in the continuous developmental guidance process of each individual student, which begins prior to the entry of the student to Colaiste Phobal and concludes when the student has left school.

The service deals with all students fairly and equitably in order to aid them in developing their full potential. The service provides a framework, which is outlined in this plan, for the delivery of the school's Guidance Programme. The Service wants to ensure a structured response to students' personal, social, educational and career guidance needs. This plan is inclusive form Junior, Senior, PLC, Minority, Multicultural and special educational needs of all students.

Background to Plan

A Consultative Process

This School Guidance Policy has evolved and developed from a consultative process involving staff, management, students, parents, and the Board of Management of Colaiste Phobal Roscre. This policy is not rigid but rather it is evolving, and it reflects the uniqueness of Colaiste Phobal in its own particular context and circumstances at this point in time

Models of Good Practice

In the preparation and development of this School Guidance Plan, Colaiste Phobal has been guided by the models of good practice in school guidance planning as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, the National Centre for Guidance in Education, and the School Development Planning Initiative. Moreover, this policy has been developed within the parameters of the guidelines of the Department of Education and Science (Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to student's access to appropriate guidance, and Circular Letter No. PPT 12/05: Guidance Provision in Second-Level Schools). Colaiste Phobal Roscre views this school whole school guidance plan as a work in progress and all of the stakeholders to this plan are committed to reviewing and improving this policy on a regular basis.

Scope of Plan

The Guidance Plan involves all aspects of school life, is geared towards the wholistic development of the student and as such it is a whole school activity. While the Guidance Counsellors have overall responsibility for co-ordinating and compiling the plan, all members of staff have a contribution to make. The Guidance Counsellors are part of the school educational team and as such work with the various members of the team to provide students with the best possible service.

Guidance Team

This Whole School Guidance Plan and the associated School Guidance Programmes reflect the on-going contribution of the following individuals and groups:

- Guidance Counsellors (A detailed account of the Role of the Guidance Counsellor's is provided in the Guidance Department's Subject Plan)
- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal
- The Chaplain
- The Co-Ordinator of Resource/Learning Support
- The Resource and Learning Support Teachers
- The Programme Co-Ordinator (for Transition Year, LCVP, and LCA)
- The Senior, Junior and 1st Year Year-heads

- The PLC Co-Ordinator
- Class Tutors (Second Level and PLC)
- The Religious Education Dept.
- The SPHE Teachers and CSPE Teachers
- The PE and Games Team
- Subject Teachers
- Special Needs Assistants
- The Cairde Programme Team
- School Secretarial Staff
- The Caretaker and all other Ancillary Staff
- NEPS and other relevant support agencies

Aims of the Whole School Guidance Team

The school Guidance Counsellors, along with the rest of the school Guidance team, aim to:

1. Promote the social and personal development of students.
2. Assist and support the educational needs of students.
3. Assist in the vocational development of students
4. Enable the students to make career choices based on sound knowledge of their personality, abilities, interests, needs and values
5. Provide direction and support to students in taking their place in and contributing to society
6. Enable students to appreciate their strengths and aptitudes, and make appropriate life choices
7. Nurture in each student a positive attitude to and a healthy respect for others.

The Guidance Plan is a reflection of this teamwork.

The Guidance Counsellors, as part of their roles, may liaise with outside agencies and bodies such as:

- Department of Education and Skills
- Local Community
- Health Service Executive
- National Educational Psychological Service

- National Educational Welfare Board
- Social Workers and Family Support Workers
- Referral Agencies
- Universities and Institutes of Technology
- Post Leaving Cert. Colleges of Education
- Solas
- Feeder Schools (Principal and Year Head)

Section 2

Current Guidance Provision and Programme

Guidance Provision

Colaiste Phobal Roscre is committed to employing a team approach in the provision of a range of learning experiences and developmental opportunities to all students. These experiences and opportunities, which will be appropriate and relevant to student needs, shall enable the growth and development of all students and shall assist students in making choices and transitions. (E.g. Transitions from Primary to Secondary School, from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle, from School to Further Education and the World of Work, from Senior Cycle to University/Institute of Technology).

A number of mechanisms are used in order to assist students in making choices. These include:

- (1) **Assessment:** The Guidance Counsellors, the Learning Support Teachers and other associated staff members carry out assessments such as the Drumcondra Reasoning Tests, Career Inventories, CAT4 and the Differential Aptitude Tests, that provide students with increased self-understanding.
- (2) **Educational Skills:** Junior Cert. and Leaving Cert. students are given instruction on Study Skills and Examination Techniques in 3rd Year and 6th Year respectively. Students are also provided with information in 1st Year and 3rd Year that helps them to make decisions on subject choice, subject level and programme choice, which is appropriate to each student's aptitude and interests and which is cognisant of students' career aspirations. Supervised after-school Study is available to students.

- (3) **Vocational Guidance Interviews:** The Guidance Counsellor holds interviews with Transition Year, Fifth Year and Sixth Year Students to assist them in identifying Third Level courses and career areas that correspond to their interests and aptitudes. The Guidance Counsellor also meets with Leaving Cert Applied students to help them to formulate a Career Action Plan. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with and provide support to PLC students on further study and career options and other educational, or social and personal guidance matters.
- (4) **Counselling:** Students are referred for counselling to the Guidance Counsellor by the School Management, Board of Management, Parents and members of staff. A student may also refer him/herself for counselling, which can assist students to explore their feelings and to cope with challenges and problems.
- (5) **Information:** Students are provided with information on external agencies and supports where necessary. Information on courses, careers is provided to students, parents/guardians and other interested parties.
- (6) **Onward Referral Service:** Individual students are referred, where it is deemed necessary by the Principal, after consultation with the Guidance Counsellors and/or Chaplain and with the Parent/Guardian to external individuals/agencies. Examples include: General Practitioners, The HSE Mid-West Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, The National Educational Psychological Service, Psychologists.

Services provided by the Colaiste Phobal Roscre School Guidance Team

The Student 'Guidance' Team work together to provide the following formal guidance services during the school year:

1. Assessment/Aptitude Testing of Students Tests;
2. School Induction and Orientation for Incoming First Years;
3. Pre-Transition supports for new students;
4. Study Skills Workshops;
5. Information Events and Open Nights (students, parents staff)
6. Extra-Curricular Activities;
7. Chaplain Home-School visits;
8. Educational Excursions;
9. Visits by Guest Speakers (on a range of social and personal and career topics)

10. Visits to Careers Exhibitions and College Open Days.
11. Liaising with Parents/Guardians;
12. Liaising with outside agencies (NEPS, NEWB, Solas, NCSE)
13. Developmental Programmes – in terms of educational development, social and personal development, developing problem solving skills and boosting resilience and coping strategies for students.
14. Referrals
15. Record Keeping

In addition to the above formal school guidance activities and services, guidance and support is provided informally and on a regular basis in a variety of contexts by all staff. There are a range of other student supports within the school including the students and learners' councils (mainstream and PLC) and the Board of Management.

Guidance Programme

- 1st Years**
- (i) Information Visits to Primary Schools by Principal
 - (ii) Information provided to parents at the Open Night for new students
 - (iii) Communication with parents, children and primary school principals/teachers of incoming students (by way of meetings)
 - (iv) Administration of Tests for Diagnostic Purposes
 - (v) Induction Day (Late August) and associated activities/Cairde Programme of Events
 - (vi) Subject Options Night for Parents/Guardians of 1st Years (late September)
 - (vii) Monitoring of students transition from Primary to Secondary Level by way of meetings with Year Head and School Management
 - (viii) Rapport building between Class Tutors, Year-Head and First Year students
 - (ix) Information and advice on subject choice for Junior Cert.
 - (x) Regular informal guidance and support by all staff
 - (xi) Chaplain visitation to First Year Parents (as required)

(xii) Information on students needs supplied to Learning Support and other teachers by the Co-Ordinator of Resource/Learning Support, on a need to know basis

(xiv) Information on time management, goal setting, decision making, friendship and barriers to it e.g. bullying, delivered through SPHE

(xv) Educational Skills Work, as appropriate and where necessary

(xvi) Student Support, as deemed necessary

(xvii) Guidance/Counselling sessions as required

2nd Years

(i) Support by way of the Class Tutor and Year-Head System

(ii) Regular contact with Principal and Deputy Principal

(iii) Career Guidance and/or counselling sessions as required

(iv) Informal Guidance and support by all staff

(v) Student support as deemed necessary

(vi) Information on time management, healthy eating, minding yourself, feelings and choices – delivered through SPHE

3rd Years

(i) Study Skills Presentation by Guidance Counsellor/ SPHE Teachers

(ii) Exam Techniques Workshops by Guidance Counsellor/SPHE

(ii) Information and Presentation on Subject Choice for LCE

(iii) Information and Advice on Programme Choice (TY, LCA, LCVP and LCE) and Subject Choice by means of an Open Night for Students and Parents/Guardians

(iv) One to One consultations on programme choice and subject choice

(v) Counselling and Career Guidance Meetings as required

(vi) Support from Year-Heads and Class Tutors

(vii) Regular contact with Principal and Deputy Principal

(viii) Student Support Meetings as deemed appropriate

4th Years

(i) Personal and Student Profile

(ii) DATs for Guidance

(iii) Study Skills/Time Management

(iv) Multiple Intelligences Workshop

(v) Letters of Application and CV Preparation

- (vi) Work Experience Preparation
- (vii) Liaison with Programme Co-Ordinator on Work Experience Programme (Two Weeks)
- (viii) Carer Investigation
- (ix) 3rd Level/PLC/Apprenticeship Options
- (x) One to One Guidance Interview (DATs feedback, subject options and career discussion)
- (xi) Course and Career Research on Qualifax, Careersportal etc.
- (xii) Guidance Class once a week
- (xiii) Counselling sessions as need arises
- (xiv) Liaison with Chaplain and Pastoral Care Team on other guidance related activities

5th Years

- (i) Study Skills and Exam Techniques
- (ii) Points Awareness Worksheet
- (iii) Guidance Class once a week
- (iv) Visiting Speakers from colleges
- (v) UCAS and applying overseas
- (vi) Support by way of the Class Tutor and Year-Head System
- (vii) Informal guidance and support by all staff
- (viii) Support from Principal and Deputy Principal
- (ix) One to one Guidance Meeting, and counselling sessions as need arises

6th Years

- (i) Attendance and participation at various Careers Events and Options Conferences eg Higher Options
- (ii) Visiting Speakers from colleges and professional bodies
- (iii) Vocational Guidance Interviews (one to one meetings between the Guidance Counsellor and individual students)
- (iv) CAO Process and Application – Information, and Preparation
- (v) Guidance Class once a week
- (vi) Points System Information
- (vii) Course and Career research on Qualifax, careersportal etc.

- (viii) Information on Sports/Other Scholarships, Student Accommodation
- (ix) Career Inventories
- (x) Study Skills and Exam Techniques Workshop
- (xi) Accepting CAO Offers and Change of Mind Form
- (xii) UCAS – Application Process
- (xiii) Post Leaving Certificate Courses
- (xiii) The Third Level Grants Schemes
- (xiv) Budgeting at Third Level, Access Programmes
- (xv) Support from Principal and Deputy Principal
- (xvi) Regular contact with and support from Year-Head and Class Tutor
- (xvii) Counselling sessions as required
- (xviii) Student Support as required

LCA

- (i) Guidance Class twice a week
- (ii) One-to-One Guidance Interview
- (iii) Information on Progression Routes into Further Education (including PLC course options, Apprenticeships, Garda Siochana)
- (iv) Careers Exhibition (LCA 2)
- (v) Work on Qualifax, Career Directions and Careers Portal websites
- (vi) Visiting Speakers
- (vii) Classroom Guidance based activities
- (viii) Exam Techniques
- (ix) Support from Principal, Deputy Principal, Co-Ordinator and Class Tutor
- (x) Liaison with Programme Co-ordinator re Work Experience (one day per week)
- (xi) Counselling sessions and student support sessions as required

PLC Students

- (i) Induction for new students – information on the Guidance service
- (ii) CAO Information and Application Procedures - Workshop
- (iii) FETAC Links Scheme – Progression Routes
- (iv) Information on Interview Preparation as required
- (v) Mock Interviews as required
- (vi) One to one meetings as requested
- (viii) Informal Guidance from PLC Co-Ordinator, , Principal and Deputy Principal
- (ix) Open Night for PLC Courses
- (x) School Visits by PLC Co-Ordinator and other staff

Cross Curricular Dimension to Whole School Guidance Plan

Linkages to other Programmes

Colaiste Phobal Roscre acknowledges the relevance of and importance of SPHE and Religion to the social and personal development focus of Guidance and Counselling. A full description and account of both SPHE and Religion in Colaiste Phobal is provided in their respective policy documents. Colaiste Phobal recognises the significant contribution that the Leaving Cert Vocational Programme, the Leaving Cert Applied and the Transition Year Programme make in providing students with appropriate and relevant Guidance-related activities. This Whole School Guidance Plan recognises the significance of the 1st Year Subjects Taster Programme and all other cross curricular links (e.g. Guidance and CSPE, Guidance and Communication/Work Experience Modules) Colaiste Phobal also recognises the guidance contribution made by Post Leaving Certificate Programmes in assisting students to explore their educational and career prospects and in enabling PLC students to progress to Higher Education or in making the transition to the workplace.

Section 3 – Guidance Principles

Accountability:

The school Guidance Counsellors are mindful of their obligations to management, staff & learners alike and recognise that they are responsible for the co-ordination and supervision of the implementation of the Whole School Guidance Plan throughout the school. The Counsellors discuss with and inform management, staff and students of information that is relevant & pertinent to their situation.

Assessment:

Psychological & educational assessment /tests are useful insofar as they provide information for the School Guidance Counsellors and others for whom it is relevant. Test information is helpful in predicting academic & occupational performance, classifying ability, assessing resources requirements and levels of achievements. Assessment results are important but must be interpreted in the context of other factors including subject performance, motivation and attitude to learning. In returning the results of a student's assessment scores the Guidance Counsellors must be aware of the confidentiality & sensitivities of the student. Tests may include personality tests, aptitude tests, interest inventories, problem checklists, general ability tests, performance tests, school & public exams.

Confidentiality:

All students have a right to confidentiality in dealing with the School Guidance Counsellors. However this right is not universal or total and there are some occasions and circumstances in which the Guidance Counsellors, in the student's best interests, has to depart from confidentiality. In counselling the learner the Guidance Counsellor must inform the student prior to disclosing information (if possible) that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in certain circumstances and if it is in their best interests that information has to shared and referred on to appropriate parties or services. Such circumstances would include abuse, bullying & risk harm to themselves or to another person or to another person's life. The student must be aware that:

1. All things discussed are confidential between the student and the Guidance Counsellor except when the student himself/herself or another person is at risk
2. Any information which highlights that, the student or another person is in danger
3. If the student is in danger of doing grievous harm to himself/herself

Consultation:

The Guidance Counsellors may need to consult or seek advice from significant adults- Parents, Senior Management, pastoral team, year head or outside agencies with regards to helping and assisting the student to cope/ deal with their issues and/or move forward. In doing so, these consultations must always respect the students' needs and maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Counselling

Counselling is the process between Counsellor and student which approaches in a holistic way personal, educational, and/or vocational issues. The availability of a counselling service can support individual students inside or outside of a classroom context and promote positive behaviour in the school. Bullying, social exclusion, family crisis, scholastic under achievement, racism, peer pressure, depression, eating disorders are examples of issues which can be assisted with the support of counselling.

Individual Counselling:

This process facilitates students on a one to one basis in understanding the self and the environment in which they live and work. It allows students to discuss personal issues in a safe environment. It helps to facilitate the clarification of goals and values for the future. It also facilitates (if required) further help and intervention /referrals to assist the student.

Group Counselling:

This is a broad term covering types of counselling for more than two people. In group counselling members listen to, support and challenge each other. In doing so they thus learn to be open and assertive. They learn to experience how others view them and their actions.

It is essential that a Counselling Service supports the wellbeing of the student and the school, particularly in the pastoral and disciplinary areas. Working within the requirements of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors Code of Ethics for legitimate practice ensures that the Whole School Guidance service is properly supervised and monitored so that student's needs are prioritised & their rights are protected. The service should be both reflective of and in line with the Department of Health & Children's national guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Children First 1999) & the Department of Education & Science Guidelines on Child Protection (2004).

Multicultural Guidance Counselling:

Multicultural dynamics and realities are a facet of modern life in Colàiste Phobal. The school Guidance Counsellors operate from their own cultural background and recognises that each student they encounter operates from his/her own cultural understanding. The school Guidance Counsellors best serve their students if they recognise it is not a narrow ethnic or group entity. Multi culture rather, is finely woven through society in strands e.g. gender, age, physical& mental ability, religious belief or socio economic groups. The Guidance Counsellors awareness and acceptance of this and their willingness to learn more about different cultures will inform their guidance counselling practice.

Ethical Requirements:

Ethical awareness is a prerequisite for the school Guidance Counsellors. They are obliged to operate, in policy, process and practice in an ethical manner. The school Guidance Counsellors primary focus is the welfare of their students and the Guidance Counsellors are obliged to act in the best interest of their students. The Counsellors must act within the law and within the guidelines as outlined by their professional body, namely the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. The school Guidance Counsellors are expected to be competent in and mindful of the legal and ethical responsibilities of their work. The school Guidance Counsellors are ethnically obliged to seek out new development in the personal, educational and vocational fields through and in their continuous professional development with a view to improving the overall Guidance & Counselling service to their learners.

Record Keeping:

Guidance Counsellors should be mindful of the fact that records have no privileges in law. Records are intended to aid the Guidance Counsellors conduct of the session rather than be a repository of confidential information. Copies of letters and calls should be recorded along with details of counselling conferences, steps taken & contacts with outside agencies.

Information:

Information is an essential component of the School Guidance Counsellor's portfolio. The school Guidance Counsellors must be involved with:

- 1. Information Gathering**
- 2. Information Organisation**
- 3. Information Dissemination**

The main function of the above is to provide as much information as possible on the widest range of options and services open to students.

It is essential that the school is familiar with:

1. The requirements of students, parents/guardians, pastoral structures and school administration, i.e. a familiarity with the whole school body and its extension into the community
2. The sources of useful information locally and nationally e.g. relevant I.T. programmes and other PLC courses, 3rd level colleges, newspapers, essential addresses and websites
3. Systems for acquiring, storing & disseminating information – there needs to be an adequate Career Library, appropriate learners and parental access to pertinent useful information
4. Methods of processing & using information for the student in an integrated way, making it clear, understandable & learner friendly

The goal of the information service is to assist students in decision making processes, problem solving and with skills enhancement directed toward the ever changing circumstances of their own development

Information for Students: Each class will be spoken to at the beginning of the school year to inform them and remind them of the School Guidance Service.

Procedure for making Appointments

Students will be informed and reminded of the procedure for making a guidance appointment and the use of a guidance slip to leave class for an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor. 1st years will be spoken to during the 1st year induction as this will be a new educational resource for them

Information for Parents: It is important that parents are made feel free and welcome to come and visit the Guidance Counsellor. An appointment system is the best operational mode. Every effort will be made to facilitate working Parents/Guardians. A phone call from a Parent/Guardian over a concern will be accommodated quickly. Information evenings in relation to subject & programme choice, options after Leaving Certificate and information on Post Leaving Certification courses are held annually. Talks on issues which may concern Parents/Guardians (self-harm substance misuse, cyber bullying) are held on a regular bases. Other information regarding Guidance & Counselling is made available as required as part of overall school information dissemination through-open nights, parent/teacher meetings, school notices & enrolment days.

Information for Staff: Transparency is the key for the school Guidance Counsellors in dealing with their colleagues. Bearing in mind the school Guidance Counsellors obligation to confidentiality, they should only where possible consciously and freely make available information which they would deem relevant about students to their colleagues particularly if they feel it would assist them in dealing with students who have educational, physical, social & behavioural problems. Information in relation to new developments in Guidance are to be shared with and made available to staff members. Enquiries should be encouraged and a sense of inclusivity fostered.

Literacy, Numeracy and Assessment

This Whole School Plan recognises the importance of initiatives in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Initiatives such as keyword strategies, common marking scheme, common assessment for first years, numeracy moments, the incorporation of literacy and numeracy opportunities into teaching methodologies on a daily basis is highly encouraged. The strategies used by the guidance counsellors during Guidance Classes and in one to one to one meetings are outlined more fully in the Dept. Plan.

Section 4 – Policies (Connected School/DES Policies)

Related School Policies/DES Policies

This Guidance Plan and Colaiste Phobal's Guidance Programme is consistent with and supported by a range of other School Policies:

- Guidance Counsellor's Department Plan
- Code of Behaviour
- Critical Incident Plan
- Critical Incident– Procedural Workbook
- Children First, 1999
- Department of Education Reporting Guidelines 2004
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Bullying Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Internet Usage Policy
- Religion Dept. Policy
- School Tour Policy

Related Procedure (contained in Guidance Folder)

- Subject Choice Procedures – Junior Cycle
- Subject Choice Procedures – Senior Cycle
- Students Appointments Procedure
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Programme Choice Procedure
- Project Task Submission Policy
- Guest Speaker Policy
- Assessment Procedures (Cat 4. Level E, DATs for Guidance, WRAT)
- Procedures regarding a newly arrived student, i.e. Transferring student
- Record Keeping/ Students Data and Record Release Procedure
- Psychometric Testing Procedure Policy

- Procedures regarding Interviews for LCVP and Mock Interviews
- Procedures for Open Day Visits
- Change of Subject Procedures
- Study Skills Programme (within Guidance Classes)

Section 5 Current Resources

Resources and Supports:

- Department of Education and Science Resources
- School Funds as Resources allow
- Guidance Counsellor Office and Guidance/Counselling Meeting Area
- Student Support Office – for meeting students
- Phone
- Computers networked to main school network
- Broadband
- Personal Laptops
- Use of computer for class as required and upon request (booking system)
- Careers Library (currently held in Guidance office)
- Regular Meetings with the Principal and Deputy Principal by the Guidance Counsellors and with other staff members (Year-Heads, Resource Co-ordinator, Teachers, Tutors, SNA's) and with parents/guardians
- Links with the community and with other agencies and groups that support students and parents e.g. Solas, NPC, ETBI.
- Links with 3rd Level Colleges (Admissions, Access Officers, School Liaison Officers), FAS, PLC Colleges
- Links with Business and Industry – Work Experience etc.

Section 6 Developmental Areas 2016-2018

The following areas have been identified as priorities in need of development.

1. **Weekly Student Support and Care Team Meeting**, involving the Guidance Counsellors, the Principal, Deputy Principal, the Chaplain, representatives from SPHE and Religion. **Target – To have weekly care team meetings in place by Autumn 2016**
2. **Class Tutor Time** – Introduction of weekly class tutor time **from the 2016/2017 school year** (target). This will allow the tutor to build a positive relationship with students in his/her care, to employ an approach geared to the wholistic needs of the students and to look out for signs of distress/concern.
3. **Weekly meetings** between the Principal/Deputy principal and the Year Heads, to monitor student progress and to address and share pastoral care concerns. **Target – Autumn 2016.**
4. **Meetings of the Senior Year head with all 5th and 6th year** students at the commencement of the school year, to enable rapport building, to promote behavioural expectations, to promote school and outside achievement. **Target: 2016/2017 school year**
5. **Extension of Friends for Life Programme** to all 1st Year Groupings in 2016/2017 following the successful piloting of the programme with Lough Gill in 2015/2016. **Target: 2016/2017 school year.**
6. To promote **increased links with Third Level Institutions in the UK** for our Post Leaving Cert. students. **Target: 2016/2018** Through making connections at Higher Options 2016 and making contacts with individual colleges.
7. To enhance our partnership agreement with Waterford Institute of Technology and **to work towards establishing links and agreements with other local Third Level Institutes** (e.x. LIT Thurles and Carlow Institute of Technology). **Target – 2016/2017 school year.**
8. **Study Skills Workshop for Senior Students** – to engage an outside company to provide study skills workshops for 5th Year and 6th Year students from **Autumn 2016**
9. **Study Skills Activities/Events** – across all years and groups, workshops by Guidance Counsellors, input from Year Heads and Tutors, visiting speakers. **Target: 2017/2018 school year.**

10. **College Week** – for all senior student groups. **Target: 2017/2018**
11. **To incorporate ICT more substantially** into Guidance Provision and Guidance activities. To purchase an updated version of the Classroom Guidance Programme with IT elements in next school year. **Target: 2016/2017 start up in Autumn.**
12. To introduce a **new Guidance Resource with Transition Years** in 2016/2017, possibly the UL Toolkit or the REACH programme. **Target: Autumn, 2016**
13. To introduce **restorative justice meetings** as a way of **resolving problem issues with students**, and to put in place a template for using this dispute resolution mechanism. **Target: To pilot this in Autumn 2016.**

Section 7 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of Whole Guidance Plan

Monitoring of the Guidance Policy/Guidance Plan

The School Management, in consultation with the Guidance Counsellor and the School Guidance Team will monitor the implementation of the Guidance Policy and its associated Guidance Programmes. Ongoing review will take place every two years, with a partial review every year to see if the priorities identifies for development and enhancement are being achieved and realised.

Evaluation and Development of Guidance Policy

This School Guidance Policy will be subject to on-going evaluation. Colaiste Phobal's evaluation of the policy will be guided by the following questions:

- Is the guidance plan working? Are the guidance objectives being achieved?
- Are the guidance programmes being provided in the most effective manner?
- Are all students being provided with appropriate guidance?
- What factors are facilitating the guidance objectives to be achieved?
- What factors are hindering its achievement?
- What Guidance needs are being unmet?

- How can unmet needs be catered for and provided for?
- How can we provide for newly emerging needs and new target groups?
- What areas of the Guidance Plan and Guidance provision requires change and improvement?
- What are the areas that need to be developed in terms of programme delivery?

Engaging in an evaluation and review process will assist the school in forward planning so that the school Guidance Programme will remain relevant to the diverse needs of the learners. The Guidance Team and the school community more generally have an important role to play in the evolution and development of the Guidance Plan. The Whole School Guidance Planning Group welcomes contributions and feedback from the entire school community and from all other stakeholders in relation to Guidance Provision and Guidance Programmes.

Methods of carrying out the Evaluation/Review

There will be a full review of the Guidance plan after a minimum of two years, carried out by the Guidance Planning Group. This consists of the Guidance Counsellors, Principal/Deputy Principal, the Learning Support/Resource Co-ordinator, a representative from PLC, SPHE and Religion, a Year Head and Class Tutor and other stakeholders to the Guidance Policy/Guidance Plan. The review process will involve:

1. Obtaining the views of the Guidance Team, through regular meetings
2. Obtaining the views of students, through class questionnaires
3. Obtaining the views of Parents/Guardians through information meetings
4. Through ongoing CPD and best practice in Guidance and Counselling from the IGC.

Review Dates: Ongoing, Two Yearly Full Review

Full Review: Two Years from the adoption of this Whole School Guidance Plan

Co-ordinator of the Whole School Guidance Plan: Liam O'Brien (Guidance Counsellor)

Liam O'Brien

Cait Leyne

Date: 22nd November 2017