

Old Bawn Community School

Whole School Guidance Plan

2017

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List of Abbreviations

CAO	Central Applications Office
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CII	Career Interest Inventory
CAT	Cognitive Aptitude Tests
CDM	Career Decision Making
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DARE	Disability Access Route to Education
DATS	Differential Aptitude Tests
DES	Department of Education and Skills
GC	Guidance Counsellor
HEAR	Higher Education Access Route
HSCL	Home School Community Liaison
IGC	Institute of Guidance Counsellors
IT	Institute of Technology
JC	Junior Certificate
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance and Education
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
PE	Physical Education
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate College
RACE	Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SUSI	Student Universal Support Ireland
TUSLA	Child and Family Agency
TY	Transition Year
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Application Service

Guidance and Counselling Plan

Section 1: Introduction

“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” (Section 1.4, page 3, DES circular 0009/2012).

In consideration of this, the Guidance and Counselling department of Old Bawn Community School is committed to providing a comprehensive service including the areas of personal, educational and vocational guidance to all school students. All schools are now required to develop a guidance plan as part of the Whole School Development Plan. The school guidance plan extends to all learning experiences, inside and outside the classroom, which contribute to the students’ development.

The Mission Statement of Old Bawn Community School guides the school community to provide an environment where the pastoral and academic needs of all students are catered for so that they may realise their potential as individuals who recognise their own self-worth.

The Guidance Plan in Old Bawn Community School reflects the aims of this Mission Statement and seeks to develop in each student a sense of autonomy and individuality. It offers support and assistance to each individual in identifying their intentions and reaching their full potential. The guidance programme in Old Bawn Community School will help students develop self-awareness, career management skills and a self-directed approach to lifelong learning.

Rationale

Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998 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” (National Centre for Guidance in Education, 2004, p.8).

Aims

Guidance permeates the school curriculum in Old Bawn. It is delivered formally and informally by many staff members teaching and non-teaching staff. The overall aim of Guidance and counselling service is:

- To develop in the students an awareness of their talents and abilities
- To explore possibilities and opportunities that best exploit those talents and abilities
- To enable students to take responsibility for themselves and thereby to grow
- To enable students to make informed choices at times of transition in their lives
- To enable students to make positive contributions to the society in which they live

Objectives

Junior Cycle students will:

- develop an understanding of themselves as individuals and in relation to others
- become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses
- acquire the competency to consult with the Guidance Counsellor and other pastoral care staff with regard to personal/educational concerns
- develop good time-management, problem-solving and decision-making skills

Senior Cycle students, in addition to the above, will:

- Develop an awareness of interests, aptitudes and personality traits in themselves and others
- Understand their own intelligence type and learning styles
- Understand the relationship of academic learning to the world of work and life
- Develop decision-making, planning, communication and problem-solving skills
- Assess personal qualities as a basis for career exploration
- Acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed decisions
- View career development as a life-long journey that affects all aspects of one's life
- Assume responsibility for her own journey

This Guidance Plan is specifically designed for Old Bawn Community School, a co-educational secondary school with approximately 910 pupils.

The Guidance Plan facilitates the career guidance and counselling of students within the context of the:

- Junior Certificate Programme;
- Transition Year;
- Leaving Certificate Programme;
- Leaving Certificate Applied Programme;

The plan is not a rigid plan as it may need to adapt accordingly to the needs of the individuals but it is based on what has been and is seen to be best practice within the school and it also incorporates the resources specific to this school.

Guidance Counsellor

Blanaid Dwyer

Time Allocation

Old Bawn Community School allocates 22 hours to the provision of Guidance and Counselling.

Section 2: Current Guidance Provision

Pre-Entry	
Assessments	Entrance test and assessment of pupils' academic profile. The Ravens and Schonell tests are administered. Results are combined with the information already received from the Primary Schools and are used to determine the pupils who may need learning support.

First Year	
Mentoring	Senior students are selected and trained to monitor and support first years as they settle in especially during the first term. They report any difficulties that students may have to the Pastoral care team, Year Head or Guidance Counsellor.
One to One Meetings	Meet with each class group to explain the Guidance Counsellor's role in the context of the pastoral care structure within the school. Explain how to make an appointment. Meet students in need of one-to-one personal, social or educational guidance and where necessary arrange referrals to outside agencies. Referrals from year heads/ teachers/self-referral from students.

Second Year	
Special needs	Liaise with SEN Teachers with regard to students with learning or behavioural problems.
Student Appointments	Individual counselling if required. Referrals from year heads/teachers/self-referrals from students
Study Skills	All students participate in a study skills workshop provided by the Guidance Counsellor

Third Year	
Subject Choice	Third Years are given presentations on the Senior Cycle options and the subject choices available to them in fifth year. The implications of their choices for Third Level entry are explained. An information evening is held for parents.
Peer to Peer subject mentoring	Representatives of Senior Cycle subjects hold an information sharing even for the 3 rd year and T.Y. students to assist in decision making.
Subject Talks from Teachers	A short presentation is made to Third Years and Transition Years by a teacher from each subject department.
Assessments	The DATS (Differential Aptitude Tests) is administered to all third year students and assists in subject choice decision making.
Student Appointments	Educational counselling and guidance is offered to students on the appropriate subjects and programme to choose. Particular attention is paid to students who may be at risk of dropping out. Personal counselling is offered as required. Referrals from year heads/teachers/self-referral from students.
RACE	The Guidance Counsellor liaises with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, deputy principal, subject teachers, parents, students and Home School Liaison (if necessary) in relation to students applying for 'reasonable accommodations' for Junior Certificate Examinations.

Transition Year	
Purpose	The main objective of this programme is to promote student self-awareness that will help determine which career path best suits their aptitudes, interests, values and personality. Each student has a workbook and a personalised online space. All classes are based in the Information Technology classrooms to allow students access online resources such as Careers Portal and Qualifax.
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists students to identify personal strengths and areas for development. • Identifies key websites and resources to enable students to independently research career areas. • Enables reflection on learning from work experience placements and the insights it provides on potential career paths. • Encourages informed decision making regarding subject choice. • Assists in formulating a career plan for senior cycle.
Duration of Classes	One 40 minute class per week for the academic year
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students complete a CV and letter of application. • Students carry out an in depth Work Experience report having participated in two separate work experience opportunities.
Subject Choice	Class time is given to enable students to make an informed decision on subject choice and the career implications of choosing certain subjects. Students avail of talks from individual subject teachers and senior cycle students.
Parents Information Evening	Information evenings are provided in the school on subject choice and senior cycle programme choice for parents.
Student appointments	Students may be referred by class teacher, year head or management for individual career or personal counselling. Students may self-refer as well.
Programme Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Qualifications Framework • Theory of Multiple Intelligences • CAO and PLC systems • Assessment of Interests and Skills • Employment Sectors • C.V. preparation • UCAS system • College Visit Preparation • Study Skills for fifth year.

Fifth Year

Student Appointments	The role of the Guidance Counsellor is explained. Individual counselling is offered as required. Referrals to outside agencies are made where necessary. The Guidance Counsellor liaises with all members of the Pastoral Care team on an ongoing basis.
Changing Subjects	Students who feel they have made a wrong choice in a subject are encouraged to talk to the Guidance Counsellor and Principal to see if it is possible to change another subject and if it fits in with their career plans.
Assessment	An interest inventory is administered to all fifth year students taking the established Leaving Certificate.
Careers Interviews	The results of the DATs, an interest inventory such as the CII (Career Interest Inventory) and Junior Certificate results form the basis for individual interviews which take place throughout the year. Possible career options are discussed with the student who is given research to do on these options.
Careers Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take place every two weeks for 40 minutes. • In order to aid this research students are made familiar with careers websites such as Qualifax, Careers Portal, CAO and UCAS. • Demonstrations are made and where possible students are brought to the computer room to research college courses. Students are also brought to the careers library to make them aware of other sources of careers information.
Programme Outline	<p>The topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Process of Choosing a Career • The National Qualifications Framework • CAO • PLC Colleges • UCAS • Points systems • Apprenticeships • Direct entry to workforce
College Visit	Students are given the option of attending a university/college open day during the first term to introduce them to third level education.
Visiting Speakers	<p>College liaison personnel are invited to give presentations to students. Visiting speakers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities and Institutes of Technology • PLC Colleges • Apprenticeships • STEM speakers
Personal Development Day	A study skills workshop is offered by the Guidance Counsellor
Integration of All Fifth Years	<p>The Guidance Counsellor facilitates a workshop whereby students who did TY and those who did not are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities such as role play and group work to highlight the importance of communicating more effectively with each other. The aim of the workshop is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent and counteract bullying • To increase students self-awareness and sensitivity to students who may be feeling isolated • To remind students that they all belong in the School and wider community and that nobody should feel left out.

Sixth Year	
Purpose	To assist students in the transition to further education, higher education, training or employment pathways.
Careers classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take place every two weeks for 40 minutes. • Helps students to understand and use the CAO process. • Assist students in applying for courses in the UK using the UCAS system. • Enables students to apply to colleges in the Further Education System. • Provides career interviews for the students to identify career areas that suits their own skills, qualities and interests. • Enables students to develop Information Technology research skills for independent course searches. • Provides information on the HEAR scheme, DARE scheme and other access routes into Higher Education. • Support students apply for SUSI grants. • Encourages the students to reflect and evaluate learning experiences in making informed career decisions.
College Visits	The majority of sixth year students attend the Higher Options in September. Students may also attend Open Days in Universities, Institutes of Technology and PLC Colleges.
Career Events	All sixth year students attend school based College Talks and receive presentations from representatives from a selection of Universities, Institutes of Technology and PLCs. Throughout the academic year students receive representations from other colleges of interest. Students receive talks on stress management and life skills .Students are reminded of the ongoing college events throughout the year using the Guidance Noticeboard, assemblies, classes, intercom, mailings and school text system.
Central Applications Office(CAO) Process	CAO booklets are distributed in November. Information received at the CAO conference is relayed to students Presentations are given on the application process. The CAO timetable is highlighted to students and the key deadlines underlined. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet students on an individual basis after CAO round 1 offers in August.
Parents Information Evening	A presentation is given to parents on all aspects of applying to the CAO and information is provided on other third level options available.
Universities and College Admission Service UCAS	Students are assisted completing their personal statements and references are written by the Guidance Counsellor. Presentation given on the UCAS process. Teacher feedback collected on skills and aptitudes of the UCAS applicants.
Higher Education access route (HEAR)	A presentation is delivered on the application process and students are assisted in any HEAR- Higher Education Access Route queries in career counselling sessions.
Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)	A Disability Access Route to Education presentation is delivered to students. Guidance Counsellor provides reference as part of the application process. Students are advised on the supports that are available at third level and information is provided on relevant personnel in third level colleges.
Colleges of Further Education	Students are advised on the application process and an interview skills workshop is delivered to students who have applied to a PLC College. Individual interview preparation is offered. Students are advised on the progression routes from further education into higher education.

Career Counselling	Each student receives a Guidance interview. A profile of the student's interests, aptitudes and values is formulated. The results from tests previously administered will be used. The profile is discussed taking into consideration current examination performance and the student's identified career goals. The interview provides the basis for continued contact with the students throughout the year. Students are also advised of consequences of changing subject levels on course selection.
Personal Counselling	This service is available to all sixth year students throughout the year and referrals made as necessary.
Individual Parents Appointments	Guidance Counsellor is accessible to meet parents for any concerns that may arise throughout the academic year.
SUSI system	Presentation is delivered to students on the Grant system and students are provided with information on the application process and contact details of the SUSI system.

Section3: The Role of the Guidance and Counselling Department

The Guidance Counsellor has a specific role to play in the main areas of guidance: personal and social, educational and career. The key areas of responsibility within the role of the Guidance Counsellor include:

- I. **Individual Counselling:** This area includes both personal and careers counselling. It aims to support pupils in their personal development, help them solve any problems they may have within learning, study, subject choice, progression and behaviour. An open door policy exists whereby students can avail of this service and their participation is entirely voluntary. The guidance counselling service will provide a caring context for counselling, engage in advocacy where appropriate and support young people in crisis. See also referrals function page 4.
- II. **Psychometric Testing/Assessment:** This includes both cognitive and career based tests. These are used to acquire information for self- understanding and to enable adequate monitoring of academic progress. Aptitude tests, interest inventories and examination performance can help in problem solving, decision-making and planning for the future. In communicating these results of tests the guidance counsellor will endeavour to ensure that the results are not misused, misinterpreted or damaging to the student in any way. The purpose of each test administered will be made clear to students and the results will be made available to the student and parents/guardians if requested.
- III. **Information:** Providing students with objective and factual up to date information on educational and occupational opportunities as well as helping them to interpret and use this information.
- IV. **Educational development programmes:** Providing knowledge and skills relating to studying, examination performance, choices of subjects and levels.
- V. **Career transitions programmes:** Providing the necessary concepts, knowledge and skills to enable students to make the transition to further and higher education, training and work.
- VI. **Classroom Guidance Activities:** Information giving and vocational preparation are examples of items covered during classroom based learning relevant to the objectives of the school Guidance Plan.
- VII. **Referrals:** Referrals come under three headings:
 - a) Self-referral by and individual student to the Guidance Counsellor
 - b) Referrals made to the Guidance Counsellor by an individual teacher, by school management or through the pastoral care team.
 - c) Referral made by the Guidance Counsellor to an outside agency -assistance for students from other qualified professionals/agencies may also be sought where appropriate. Areas of concern may include learning difficulties, bereavement, emotional and behavioural problems. In such areas the Guidance Counsellor will seek the consent of parents/guardians prior to all external referrals.

Other roles in the Guidance Programme

Guidance and Counselling is seen as a whole school concern. Thus, a holistic approach is advocated. This plan acknowledges the important roles played by the following parties:

A. Within the school community:

- Guidance Counsellor
- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Student Development Officers
- Leaving Certificate Applied Coordinator
- Transition Year Coordinator
- Class Teachers
- HSCL Teacher
- Chaplaincy
- SEN Teachers
- SNA's
- SPHE Teachers
- Subject Teachers
- School Secretaries
- Parents
- Students

B. In the broader community:

- TUSLA
- NEPS Representatives
- Tallaght Guidance Counsellor Network
- Employers
- Admission Officers in Colleges
- SOLAS Representatives
- Youth Reach Representatives
- DES Examination commission

Guidance related Policies

- Anti bullying
- Critical incident
- Substance misuse
- SPHE (RSE) policy
- Special Educational needs policy
- Child protection

Section 4: Meetings with Students

Student Appointments: protocols / procedures

The Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Teachers, or any Subject teacher may refer a student to the Guidance Counsellor. Parents are welcome to ask the Guidance Counsellor to meet with their child. Students themselves may also request an appointment.

The Guidance Counsellor will usually ask the referee how urgent the appointment is. If the appointment is deemed urgent every effort will be made to facilitate the student during that school day. If not they will be seen within the week. Each student who has an appointment to see the Guidance Counsellor is given an appointment slip with the time and date of their appointment. This slip is shown to the subject teacher when the student is requesting absence from class. It is signed by the subject teacher indicating the time the student leaves the classroom. It is later signed by the GC showing time at which interview finished and is then returned to the subject teacher by the student.

Group protocols / procedures:

Where a group of students request a meeting with the Guidance Counsellor or are referred an appointment slip is issued and a record is kept of the meeting with the group.

Follow up if required takes place with the appropriate persons.

Section 5:

Custom and Practice for Guidance and Counselling

Confidentiality

In both Personal Counselling and in Careers/Vocational Guidance Interviews the confidentiality rule is followed i.e. school management, class teacher, year head and/or parent/guardians are informed if it is felt that the student is a danger to herself and/or to others or it is a legal requirement. The student is informed of the limits of confidentiality at the beginning of a session. If it is felt it is in the student's best interests to inform a Teacher/Parent/Guardian of a particular difficulty, this is done with the knowledge and hopefully the agreement of the student.

Record Keeping

All records will be kept in accordance with the provisions of the schools Data Protection Policy and under the Freedom of Information Act. In the case of personal counselling records the Guidance Counsellor will use appropriate short hand to protect the identity of the student.

Ethics

As a qualified chartered member of the IGC Guidance Counsellors must abide by the Institute's Code of Ethics and be mindful of the Institute's constitution (IGC Constitution and Code of Ethics 2004).

Competency

It is essential to maintain membership of the IGC and to fully engage with Continuous Professional Development. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) or in-career development is crucial to the work of the Guidance Counsellor. Regular attendance at local IGC meetings and Counselling Supervision is facilitated by the school through sensitive timetabling. The IGC annual conference provides a range of in-service through the provision of workshops and presentations relevant to our work. Additional in-service is organised at local or/and at national level and is open to all registered current members of the IGC. The DES supports the provision of in-service for IGC members through funding. The IGC has numerous links with organisations all offering in-career development. Attendance at open days, career seminars etc. all constitute in-career development.

Assessment and Testing

Incoming 1 st year students	Schonell and Ravens tests
3 rd year students	DAT's Test
5 th year students	Career Interest Inventory / Rothwell Miller Interest Inventory Careersportal interest Inventory

Procedures for distributing test results

The results of the Ravens and Schonell tests are used to identify first years who would benefit from learning support or resource.

DATs results combined with interest test results are used during guidance interviews to assist with subject choice and with Fifth and Sixth years in relation to career / third level choices.

- Subject teachers
- Websites – qualifax, careersportal, CAO, UCAS etc.

Section 8: Areas for Development

The following areas will receive particular attention (time permitting) in the academic year 2016-2017:

1. General

The Guidance department plans to develop a link on the school website to enable the wider community to access relevant information and resources relating to both Career Guidance and personal counselling. This will be of specific relevance to Old Bawn Pupils and parents / Gaurdians of Old Bawn Community School pupils.

2. Fifth Years

The Careers Interest Inventory will be administered to all 5th years from 2016 to assist in career related decision making.

In liaison with the Pastoral Care Team, a 5th Year integration workshop will be introduced to encourage and support a health transition for students from 3rd year to 5th year with students coming from TY to 5th year.

3. Maintenance of Careers Library

As part of the Mc Mahon Library, a Career Guidance section will be set up and updated regularly.

4. Student survey

A destination survey will be implemented to identify where past pupils have continued education or training.

Also a student survey will be implemented at the end of 5th year, to help identify how the current Guidance curriculum could be improved.

Bibliography/Government Publications

Framework for Considering Provision in Guidance in Post Primary Schools- Circular 0009/2012 September 2012, Department of Education and Skills

National Centre for Guidance (2004) Planning the School Guidance Programme. Dublin: NCGE

The Education Act, 1998 www.oireachtas.ie

Section 9: Appendix 1

Other roles in the Guidance Programme

Guidance and Counselling is seen as a whole school concern. Thus, a whole school approach is advocated. This plan acknowledges the important roles played by the following parties within the school community:

- Guidance Counsellor – co-ordinates guidance and counselling activities within the school
- Principal – makes adequate provision for the successful delivery of the school guidance programme and is the designated liaison person for any child protection concerns
- Deputy Principals – supports the work of the Pastoral Care Team, Year Heads, Form Teachers and Subject Teachers
- Chaplaincy – provides support for the student population, in particular the Junior Cycle students. This support tends to take place in group settings and is mostly in relation to integration, transition, mental health workshops and talks from outside agencies.
- School Secretary – cares for pupils arriving in the office for various reasons.
- Year Heads and Student Development Officers – The Guidance Counsellor communicates regularly with year heads and S.D.O.'s. General information regarding particular students is exchanged at these informal meetings. The Guidance Counsellor keeps the year head and S.D.O.'s informed regarding upcoming guidance talks and events
- Transition Year Coordinator - informs Third Years about Transition Year and coordinates work experience. Along with a core group of teachers important planning decisions are made at a weekly meeting
- Class Teachers – work with class groups under the general heading of pastoral care. Informal meetings take place between individual class teachers and the Guidance Counsellor. Issues usually relate to concern for individual students - either academic or personal
- Home School Community Liaison Teacher – may visit homes of students who are not attending school and are at risk of dropping out
- SEN Teachers – deals with pupils identified with special academic or behavioural needs and liaises with the Guidance Counsellor as relevant supports are required.
- SPHE Teachers – educate the students by following a curriculum outlined by the DES in the area of social, personal, and health education.
- Subject Teachers – cater to the academic as well as the individual needs of students within their class groups and liaise with the Guidance Counsellor on an ongoing basis regarding educational and personal issues affecting students
- Parents – play an integral part in the personal, social, as well as the educational and career decisions of school pupils;
- Students – identify their own needs within the guidance programme.