



St. Caimin's Community School

Guidance and Pastoral Care Plan

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Legal framework	2
Scope	2
Relationship to Mission Statement	3
Rationale	3
Objectives	3
Related Policies and Documents.....	4
Guidance and Pastoral Care	5
Educational Guidance	8
Career Development	8
Bereavement Support	9
Review	9

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

Guidance is a statutory requirement for schools under Section 9 (c) of the Education Act 1998:

‘to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices’

The “Guidelines for Second-Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, Relating to Students’ Access to Appropriate Guidance” (DES 2005) state that *‘the school’s guidance plan is a whole school responsibility’*

Circular 0009/2012, ‘Staffing arrangements in Post-Primary Schools for the 2012/13 school year’ restates this position: *‘each school develops collaboratively a school guidance plan as a means of supporting the needs of its students.’*

Pastoral care in St. Caimin’s Community School seeks to give a real presence to the values of our mission statement. A strong commitment to pastoral care has been a hallmark of the school community since its foundation in 1985. It is integral to all aspects of the school community, and involves every member of that community as we work towards realising the pastoral goals of the school.

It is against this backdrop and in the context of the decision in Budget 2012 to withdraw the provision for ex-quota guidance hours to schools that this guidance and pastoral care plan was prepared.

Legal Framework

This plan is being developed in response to the relevant legislation and resource documents including:

- Section 9 (c) of The Education Act, 1998
- Circular PPT 0009/2012, ‘Staffing arrangements in Post-Primary Schools for the 2012/13 school year’
- ‘Planning the School Guidance Programme’, National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE), 2004
- ‘Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications for Section 9 (c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to students’ access to appropriate guidance. Inspectorate Department of Education and Skills, 2005
- ‘Looking at Guidance, Teaching and Learning in Post-Primary Schools’, Inspectorate Department of Education and Skills, 2009

Scope

This plan applies to all of the community of St Caimin’s School. Its interventions and supports apply particularly to the students of the school, as they progress through their second-level education in St. Caimin’s School.

Relationship to Mission Statement

The school Guidance and Pastoral Plan supports the values of the school outlined in its Mission Statement:

Every person is valued equally in accordance with our Christian Tradition at St. Caimin's School.

Each person within the school community can enjoy developing to the fullest, while feeling cared for and safe.

Our educational structures are ordered, based on tolerance, fairness and respect, while sensitive to our caring world.

Rationale

This plan has evolved for the purpose of providing guidance and pastoral support to students. It gives formal structure to a whole-school approach to this provision. Additionally, it informs parents, students and teachers that guidance and pastoral care will be delivered in an integrated and proactive way.

Objectives

The objectives of this Guidance and Pastoral Plan are to enable students:

- to clarify educational, social and career goals
- to address personal issues.
- to identify and explore opportunities
- to grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves
- to make informed choices about their lives and follow through on these choices

Furthermore, it seeks:

- to support the development of every student
- to acknowledge and support each person's role in the school community
- to provide an environment where each individual can develop self-esteem and a sense of personal responsibility
- to provide an environment where each individual can develop a place in society and a responsibility to society
- to nurture teaching and learning so that each individual can reach his or her full potential
- to monitor the well-being of all students
- to apply best practice in the protection of students and the promotion of their welfare, within the resources available
- to work effectively with statutory authorities and outside agencies as and when required
- to ensure that any allegations of abuse are dealt with justly and promptly.

Related Policies and Documents

This plan may be read in conjunction with the following:

- Mission statement
- Policy on countering bullying behaviour
- Admissions policy
- Guidelines for the protection of children
- SPHE and RSE policies
- Critical incident policy
- Code of behaviour for students
- Special education needs policy
- Homework policy
- Attendance policy
- Substance abuse policy
- Health & safety statement
- Internet acceptable usage policy
- Dignity At Work Charter
- CCTV Policy

Guidance and Pastoral Care Provision

Guidance and Pastoral Care in St. Caimin's focuses on three areas:

1. Personal and Social Development
2. Educational Guidance
3. Career Development

1. Personal and Social Development

Personal and social development is delivered through Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme where it is timetabled at both Junior and Senior Cycle. It comprises the following modules:

- Belonging and Integrating
- Communication Skills
- Friendship
- Emotional Health
- Substance Use
- Self Management
- Physical Health
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Influences and Decisions
- Personal Safety

Guidance and Pastoral Roles

Guidance and Pastoral Care is not provided exclusively by any one individual or group. It is a holistic process that benefits from the synergy of many working together with a shared vision towards a common goal. Personal support forms part of the Guidance and Pastoral Care Plan, offered in an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crises. It is recommended that in the case where students require personal support over a protracted period of time that they be referred to the relevant outside agencies.

Board of Management

The Board of Management manages the school in accordance with the Education Act (1998) and the Deed of Trust for Community Schools.

Principal

The Principal controls the internal organisation and management of the school, and exercises supervision over the teaching and non-teaching staff.

The Deputy Principal is in charge of the school in the absence of the Principal. In the absence of the Principal and Deputy Principal, an Assistant Principal is placed in charge of the school.

Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal, as a member of the management team, assists the Principal in the internal organisation and management of the school. The Deputy Principal works with the year heads, class tutors, chaplain, guidance counsellor and subject teachers in developing, reviewing and implementing the pastoral care programme in the school. The Principal and Deputy Principal both give witness to our Guidance and Pastoral Care structure by supporting students and staff in developing the school community.

Year Head

The Year Head has general responsibility for the welfare of a year group. The year head oversees the students' attendance and punctuality, academic performance and behaviour, and liaises with the parents of the year group. The Year Head works closely with the subject teachers, tutors, guidance counsellor, chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal.

Class Tutor

The class tutor takes a particular interest in the activities and progress of the students in a class group, and helps the students to be positive in their behaviour and work. In addition, the class tutor serves as a special link between the school administration and the students, and co-operates with the year head in ensuring the students' observance of the school rules.

The professional relationship between tutor and student is particularly enhanced by the arrangement where tutors of first-year class groups also teach Social, Political and Health Education (SPHE) to that group.

Subject Teachers

The Subject Teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of good discipline within his or her class, while sharing a common responsibility for pastoral care and good order within the school. The subject teacher is the key in helping students to achieve their full potential. The subject teacher liaises with year heads, guidance counsellor and chaplain.

Guidance Counsellor

The guidance counsellor has a particular function in relation to the protection of children. She works collaboratively with all staff members and management. She meets regularly with the principal, deputy principal and the chaplain. The guidance counsellor has strong links with outside supportive agencies and is a member of the critical incident team. The guidance counsellor is involved in testing pupils, and assists in the accommodation of pupils with learning difficulties at examination time. The guidance counsellor is

involved in delivering central aspects of the SPHE programme such as study and career investigation, and meets the SPHE co-ordinator and teachers as the need arises.

Chaplain

The chaplain collaborates with all members of the school community and in particular with those who hold designated pastoral responsibilities relating to students, staff and members of the wider community connected with the school. The chaplain meets regularly with the guidance counsellor, Principal and Deputy Principal. The chaplain actively engages with year heads and all members of the pastoral care team and outside supportive agencies. She is a member of the critical incident team. The chaplain also liaises with the learning support co-ordinator to review the progress of individual students. Appropriate programmes and initiatives are incorporated into the school's yearly plan. The Chaplain has a specific mission toward the spiritual, pastoral care and faith development of the entire school community.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

The special educational needs co-ordinator co-ordinates the provision and application of resources for students with special educational needs and/or specific learning difficulties. She liaises with all staff, parents/guardians and outside agencies. She applies for resources including resources hours, special needs assistants and assistive technology. She oversees timetables for students requiring learning support and assistance. She liaises with special needs assistants, guidance counsellor, chaplain, year heads, subject teachers, Deputy Principal and Principal.

Student Council Liaison Teacher

The student council liaison teacher oversees the running of the student council within the school. He liaises with students, staff and management in issues relating to the students. He facilitates the training and co-ordination of student mentors and the student mentoring programme.

Critical Incident Team

The critical incident team are members of the school community who have designated responsibilities in the event of a critical incident, irrespective of where or when such a critical incident may occur. The Critical Incident Team liaises with the pastoral care team as the need arises.

Parents

This Plan adopts the legal definition of parent as set down in the Education Act, 1998:

Parent includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts 1964 to 1997, or any other person acting in loco parentis who has a child in his or her care, subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts 1952 to 1958, or where the child has been adopted outside the state, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter.

The Plan recognises that parents play a pivotal role in developing, promoting and supporting the growth of their child both at home and within the school. Parents play a vital role in shaping their children's attitude to school. A supportive home environment shapes attitudes that promote the holistic development of the child. It is clear that the engagement of adults in a child's life, especially parents, exerts a significant influence on how a child engages in their personal and social development. It is important that parents are aware of and support this Plan together with other school policies and procedures for it is through this type of collaborative engagement with the school community that problems are most easily resolved.

Parents are further encouraged to involve themselves in positive participation in school life in order to facilitate the development of mutual and beneficial links between school and home. The Parents'

Association, too, in hosting seminars builds the personal capacity of parents. This new learning, in turn, will assist them in further supporting the personal and social development their child.

The National Parents Council Post Primary and the National Association of Principals and Deputies (NAPD) has endorsed the illustrated book 'MOVING UP'. It serves as a useful guide for parents of children transferring to second-level schools. The book's author is John Stevenson. This booklet, subject to availability, will be made available to the parents of all incoming pupils.

Mindful that students in difficulty are often the last to recognise it, parents have an important role to play in indentifying indicators. Here, absenteeism, truancy, poor organisation, notes in the Student Journal, lack of concentration etc. can serve as pointers.

Students

This Plan seeks to attend to the welfare of every student, including the right to participate in and benefit from education. It helps students to focus on their personal responsibility for their own behaviour and to experience the value of being a responsible and participatory member of St. Caimin's School. Students have an important part to play in creating and sustaining a positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect that nurtures teaching and learning.

Behaviour is modelled, in part, on the behaviour of older or more senior students. Thus these senior students have a particular responsibility as role models in respect of being faithful to the values of the Mission Statement. When senior students exercise restraint and respect, they normalise reasonableness and in so doing make it part of the school's culture. Such modelling is enhanced by the practice of senior students mentoring incoming first year pupils.

SPHE, Religious Education and Civil, Social, Political Education (CSPE) cover many aspects of Personal and Social Development. Here, students develop an awareness of their own needs and difficulties and come to know how to ask and who to ask for advice and help. Because St. Caimin's adopts a whole-school approach to Guidance and Pastoral Care students are free to approach any member of staff with their concerns. Accordingly, a student may talk to a subject teacher, class tutor, year head, guidance counsellor, school chaplain, deputy principal and principal as they see fit.

Fellow students also have a part to play in supporting their peers in difficulty through listening to and hearing what they say. Fellow pupils, too, can help by drawing the attention of teachers to those who are struggling with some concern or other.

Student Council

The Student Council is a representative structure for all the students in the school. It provides students with the opportunity to become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents. It creates a positive atmosphere and works for the benefit of the school and its students.

The student council liaison teacher oversees the running of the student council within the school. He liaises with students, staff and management in issues relating to the students. He facilitates the training and co-ordination of student mentors and the student mentoring programme.

Section 27 (4) of the Education Act reads:

A student council shall promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the board, parents and teachers.

Against this backdrop the student council has a role to play in supporting the norms and values of the school. In so doing the Student Council reinforces the personal and social development of students and models a way life that is consistent with the Mission Statement.

The student council socialises the norms of behaviour expected in the school. In so doing the council enables a culture where bullying and other problems are shared. The council in participating in the development of codes of behaviour and polices on countering bullying gives the students a sense of ownership.

2. Educational Guidance

Educational guidance is delivered in an integrated and collaborative way and includes the following:

Educational Learning	Persons Involved
• Motivation/Goal Setting	Subject teacher, parents, students and Learning to Learn Coordinator (LtLC) and Year Head (YH)
• Organisational Skills	Subject teacher, parents, students, YH and LtLC
• Homework	Subject teacher, YH, parents and students
• Study Skills	Subject teacher, YH, parents, students and LtLC
• Exam Preparation and techniques	Subject teacher, YH, parents, students and LtLC
• Under Performance	Subject teacher, parents, students, class tutor and YH
• Retention	NEWB, Parents, Year Head, Deputy Principal (DP), Guidance Counsellor (GC) and Chaplain
• Subject Choices	Subject teacher, parents, students and GC
• Subject Levels	Subject teacher, parents, students and GC
• Subject Change	Year Head, parents, student, and GC
• Programme Options	Programmes coordinator, students, parents, teachers, GC, Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator,
• Administration and Interpretation of psychometric assessment	SEN teachers and GC
• Identification of students with special needs	SEN teachers, GC parents, teachers and students

3. Career Development

Career development is delivered in an integrated and collaborative way and includes the following:

Career learning	Person(s) Involved
• Research and ICT skills for career exploration	Guidance Counsellor (GC), Leaving Certificate Vocational Preparation (LCVP) and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) teachers
• Grant and scholarship applications	GC, parents and students

• CAO, UCAS & PLC & personal statements	GC, parents and students
• Liaising with 3 rd Level	GC, parents and students
• References	GC, teachers, Principal and DP
• Access Programmes	GC, parents and students
• Apprenticeships	GC, parents and students
• Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)	GC and parents
• Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)	GC, parents and outside agencies
• Information on competencies and skills for the working world	GC, LCVP teachers, students, parents and outside agencies
• Labour Market Trends	GC, LCVP and LCA teachers, students, parents and outside agencies
• Industry Sector Information	GC, LCVP teachers, students, parents and outside agencies

Career learning opportunities will also be available on a Careers Portal on the school's Virtual Learning Environment.

Bereavement Support

The Principal, Deputy Principal, chaplain, guidance counsellor, pastoral care team, teachers and other staff support students who experience bereavement, separation or loss.

They may carry out some of the following functions, as appropriate:

- In conjunction with the principal, ensure that all teachers are made aware of a bereavement or loss, especially the year-head and class tutor
- Place relevant information on the Bereavement Notice Board in the staff room.
- Attend removal and funeral. In some cases the chaplain will visit the home of the bereaved
- Meet student on his or her return to school. (In some cases this will be phased depending on the individual circumstances)
- Meet student on a regular basis formally and informally on a daily and weekly basis.
- Invite student to attend bereavement support group at an appropriate time
- Inform staff if student is having particular difficulties
- Seek outside help or assistance for a student and his/her family should the need arise

Ratification

This plan was ratified by the board of management on the 23rd October 2012

Review

This Plan will be reviewed by the staff in May 2013.

