

Section 1: The School Guidance and Counselling Plan and Programme

1.1 School Mission Statement

Our Lady's Grove, is a Catholic Community in keeping with the educational philosophy of St. Claudine Thévenet and the stated ethos of the school.

We are committed to providing a quality education in pursuit of excellence. We endeavour to provide a teaching and learning environment which encourages the school community to develop to its full potential cognisant of its talents and skills.

We aim to work together in a safe, respectful, caring and just environment. We value the principles of mutual respect, equality and tolerance encouraging positive self-image, confidence and pride in all achievements.'

1.2 Guidance and Counselling: Plan and Principles

The Guidance Plan reflects our ethos and endeavours to uphold the holistic student centered approach which is at the core of our ideology. The Guidance Plan is ongoing and developmental in nature. It is a whole school responsibility and is a core component of the school's overall programme. It aims to reflect the needs of all our students in the school community covering the entire academic spectrum, our international students and those in need of emotional and psychological support.

This plan is a living document and reflects the uniqueness of Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove in its own particular context and circumstances. The Guidance and Counselling Plan refers to the 'subject' guidance as it is delivered to our students cognisant of their needs and mindful of the available resources within the context of a whole school approach to Guidance. It specifies how the guidance needs of students is addressed. It includes reference to personal counselling, an integral component of the work of the Guidance Counsellor. The Guidance Plan is an integral part of the school's overall development plan.

The Plan particularly encompasses the following school aims:

- To maintain a caring, stable environment where each student feels safe and secure.
- To develop in each student her diverse talents and potential; moral, spiritual, academic, social, physical, creative and emotional.
- To recognise and reward effort and achievement thus promoting a true sense of confidence and wellbeing.
- To help students identify and explore opportunities

- To help students grow in independence and to take responsibility for their own learning
- To engage students in life work decision making
- To prepare students for transitions e.g. primary to secondary, junior cycle to senior cycle, school to the world of college/work

We strive through the ethos, principles and actions articulated and undertaken in the Guidance and Counselling plan to empower our students to make meaningful choices that lead to fulfilling and happy lives.

1.2 Aims of the Guidance and Counselling Plan

The Aims of the Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove Guidance Plan include:

- Providing a framework for the delivery of the School's Guidance Programme.
- Ensuring a structured response to students' personal and social, educational and career guidance needs.
- Being inclusive and balanced, providing for the needs of Junior students, Senior Students, and students with Special Educational Needs and minority students in the school.
- All guidance activities - classroom, individual and group counselling sessions, vocational guidance interviews, attendance at career exhibitions and Open Days in the Guidance Programme where appropriate.
- Providing a welcoming, challenging, rewarding and future oriented Curriculum in all areas of guidance counselling.
- Fostering a spirit of partnership and collaboration with students, teachers, management, Board of Management personnel, and professional colleagues in outside agencies and particularly with parents.

1.3 Objectives of the Guidance and Counselling Plan

The objectives of the Guidance and Counselling Plan are:

- To develop in each student an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities, needs and responsibilities.
- To explore and develop social and personal, educational and career opportunities.
- To foster confidence in student's developing skills.
- To develop student decision making skills in order to make informed decisions and to follow through on these decisions.

- To develop ICT skills in the guidance field.
- To foster and promote the concept of lifelong learning.
- To provide support to students who are experiencing difficulty or are feeling vulnerable at a particular time in their lives.
- To teach students how to ask for, and access help when they may require it.

1.4 Rationale, Implication and Scope

The Education Act (1998), Section 9, states that a school “shall use its available resources to ... (c) ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices” ... (d) “promote the moral, spiritual and personal development of students ... in consultation with the parents, having due regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.”

The provision of guidance is a statutory requirement for schools under this act. Thus Guidance is an integral part of the school’s overall programme. It refers to the range of learning experiences, provided in a developmental sequence, that aim to assist students in developing an awareness and appreciation of their talents, interests and abilities in order to make choices about their lives and encompasses the three separate but interlinked areas of

- Personal and Social Development
- Educational Guidance
- Career Guidance

(Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9 (c) of the Education Act, 1998, relating to students’ access to appropriate guidance, pg.4)

Guidance activities that assist students to make informed choices include:

- Personal counselling
- Personal and Social developmental programmes
- Educational and careers information (classroom, individual vocational guidance interviews, attendance at careers events, etc.)
- Assessment using psychometric instruments and inventories
- Use of ICT (e.g. Qualifax and CareersPortal)

Due to specialist training, the guidance counsellor leads, coordinates and delivers the school guidance programme in collaboration with school management, staff and key stakeholders in response to the guidance needs of students. However, ‘it is established policy that guidance

is a whole school activity and under existing arrangements each school develops collaboratively a school guidance plan as a means of supporting the needs of its students' (DES, 2012:43).

1.5 Guidance as a whole-school activity: Roles and Responsibilities

While the delivery of the Guidance Programme is the responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor, a whole school approach is essential to realise this objective. It is therefore recognised that all members of the school community have a role to play in its implementation, including management, subject teachers and administrative staff. The following personnel play a key role in its delivery.

- Guidance Counsellor:
- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Learning Support Team
- Student Support Team/Care team
- Leader of wellbeing, student voice, parental voice...
- Deans of well-being Senior Students, Junior Students and Transition Year
- Class Tutors
- SPHE teachers
- R.E. teachers
- Subject Teachers
- Prefects/Class Captains
- 5th year Mentors
- Student Council
- Parents Association
- Boards of Management
- Outside Agencies

1.6 Guidance Counsellor: Roles and Responsibilities

Guidance planning in Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove, is a collaborative process evolving over time, reflecting the needs of the students, available resources and contextual factors. The establishment of a Guidance Planning group in the 2018/2019 academic year together with the continued work of the wellbeing board of studies to integrate the vision and

ambition of the Department of Education and skills in Wellbeing Promotion as set out in the Wellbeing policy Statement and Framework for practice 2018-2023 is a key aspect of this. Bearing this in mind and as outlined in 'A Framework for Guidance Planning' the following are the main areas of responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor

Counselling

The purpose of counselling with the school setting is to empower students to make decision, solve problems, change behaviour and resolve issues in their lives. Such activity may be personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling or a combination of all three. Counselling is a key part of the school Guidance Programme offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. Counselling on an individual basis is part of the support structure that the school provides to students. Within the overall allocated time for Guidance, adequate time is given for the counselling function of the Guidance Programme. A comprehensive overview of the Counselling service provided including referral procedures can be found in Section 5 of the Guidance Plan.

Managing, Organising and Coordinating

It is the Guidance Counsellor's role to organise the guidance activities into a coherent programme in conjunction with the management and staff of the school. The nature and range of activities as outlined above are based on the premise that Guidance is both a whole school approach and a specialist area in education.

Support

The Guidance Counsellor provides support to students, parents, teachers, the Principal, Board of Management and referral agencies in assisting the personal, social, career and educational development of students. Such support may include advocacy on behalf of a student. Support also refers to assistance in the planning and development of the SPHE programme, the Transition Year Programme and the Well-Being programme.

Assessment

Assessment tools are used by qualified personnel to supplement curriculum based assessment and teacher reports. The Guidance Counsellor is trained to use a range of psychometric tests and other evaluative instruments to support relevant objectives of the school Guidance Programme. Such objectives may be related to career and educational planning, personal decision making and development of self-awareness.

Information

Assisting students to acquire, interpret and use information relevant to their personal, social, educational and career development.

Consultation

Consulting with parents, school staff and students.

Feedback

Providing feedback to the Board of Management, school management and staff on the needs of individual students, groups and the school as an organisation and how the school Guidance Programme has supported students' choices and transitions.

Follow-up

Following up with former students regarding progression routes and destinations.

Classroom Guidance Activities

Providing classroom based learning experiences that are relevant to the objective of the school Guidance Programme. Such experiences may include information giving, ICT, developmental skills (planning, decision making, study skills, communication and values) and vocational preparations.

Planning and Organising Workplace Learning

This is normally undertaken during Transition Year.

Networking

The Guidance Counsellor develops and maintains links with employers, relevant agencies, institutions and past pupils to enhance the guidance work.

Promoting Change

This refers to assessing psychometric instruments, inventories and information booklets which are in use and where appropriate to promote change.

Monitoring and Reviewing

This refers to making provision for ongoing monitoring and review. Seeking the views, comments and observations of students, teachers, parents and school management in formal and informal ways can provide valuable information when reviewing, evaluation and planning the Guidance Service.

Professional Development

The Guidance Counsellor engages in ongoing CPD in order to be aware of ongoing changes in the fields of training, education, work and child welfare. School management facilitates the attendance

of the Guidance Counsellor at relevant events and in-career professional training during the school year.

Reflective Practice and Record Keeping

Self-Appraisal and self-reflection allow the Guidance Counsellor ascertain whether set targets are achieved and identification of new targets. Reflective Practice is an intrinsic and ongoing part of the Guidance Counsellor's personal and professional development thus enabling the Guidance Counsellor to improve the quality of service and intervention provided.

Record keeping refers to the records of every personal interview which the Guidance Counsellor has with a student. These records are stored professionally and enable the counsellor to monitor the Guidance Programme.

1.7 Counselling

‘Counselling is a key part of the School Guidance Programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of crisis. Counselling in schools may include personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling or combinations of these’ (Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9 (c) of the Education Act, 1998, relating to students’ access to appropriate guidance, pg.4).

All students need access to specialist help which will enable them to cope with and manage their particular situation; thus the need for individual counselling.

Counselling has as its objective the empowerment of students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing at a given time in their lives. (See Section 5 of the Guidance Plan)

1.8 Student Support

The Guidance Counsellor does not work in isolation and many members of the school community offer students support. Students often talk to a class teacher, a tutor or a Dean with whom they feel comfortable as students relate to different teachers in different ways. All staff members recognise that this support is not a counselling service, confidentiality should never be guaranteed and this is made clear to the student. It is important that the student support team be aware of any student who is struggling in school and therefore all staff inform the Guidance Counsellor if they are offering support to any student. This ensures a consistent, coherent and professional service to our students.

[Student Referral Process and Resources \(Section 5 \)](#)

Section 2: Aims of the Junior and Senior Cycle Guidance Programme

2.1 Aims of the Junior Cycle Guidance Programme

With the introduction of “A Framework for Junior Cycle” the importance of Wellbeing as a component of the new programme highlights the need for enhanced support within our wider guidance provision.

Wellbeing includes learning opportunities that enhance students’.....*physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing...*” Both the Framework for Junior Cycle and the Whole School Guidance Framework highlight the following areas of learning for students:

- Developing Myself
- Developing My Learning
- Developing My Career Path

The competences associated with the above areas are

- Developing and maintaining self-esteem and positive self - image
- Interacting effectively with others
- Employing effective personal learning /examination strategies
- Making educational choices in line with career aspirations
- Using career related information and sources appropriately
- Understanding the world of work and life

Thus the aims of the **Junior Cycle Guidance Programme** include:

- Assisting students in developing an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Enabling students to make a successful transition from primary to second level education.
- Integrating all students, regardless of their social, economic or religious background.
- Informing students and parents of subject options/effective choices regarding subjects and how these choices can have a significant impact on their future in relation to the Junior and Leaving Certificate.
- Supporting students in choosing the correct subject levels that are appropriate to their educational abilities.
- Supporting students in counselling sessions, who may be at risk of early school leaving.
- Identifying and referring students who may be at risk to themselves or who are experiencing personal crisis.
- Providing counselling and support to all students whether it be personal/social, educational or career related.

- Being present at parent teacher meetings to offer support to parents/guardians and informing them of how and when they can make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Linking student's aptitudes, achievements and interests to career options.
- Assisting students in relation to Subject Choice for the Senior Cycle and developing awareness of the implications of subject selection and levels for career choice.
- Organising the delivery of study skills workshops and exam techniques for Junior Cycle students through Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) classes and the Guidance Counselling Service.

(Framework in Appendix)

2.2 Aims of the Senior Cycle Guidance Programme

The Guidance Programme at Senior Cycle aims to assist in the full development of each student's potential, to help the students grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem and to prepare her for higher or further education, training or employment.

The Guidance Programme endeavours to provide students with opportunities to

- Prepare to manage their successful transition from second level to further or higher education, training or employment.
- Identify their own key motivating values and factors
- Prepare for the successful transition to adulthood
- Learn about job search and job retention skills, develop research and ICT skills so that they can be self-directed in their career exploration and development.
- Learn about the world of work, including employment rights and responsibilities
- Develop awareness of the need for Lifelong learning
- Develop skills to become independent and self-motivated learners
- Develop an awareness of the importance of self-care and compassion and the many other factors that contribute to their well-being

The aims of the **Senior Cycle Guidance Programme** include:

- Assisting students in making the transition from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle.
- Informing students and parents of the significance of making the correct subject choice options for the Senior Cycle, as this has implications and may present limitations for their future study/career choice.

- Supporting students when choosing subject levels appropriate to their educational abilities.
- Providing career advice and information regarding third level and further education grants, Post Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs), promoting and encouraging attendance at college open days, building up resources for student use and showing students how to research information regarding college courses.
- Facilitating one-to-one guidance counselling sessions for Senior Cycle students.
- Delivering Guidance classes in 6th, 5th, 4th, 2nd and 1st year on a timetabled basis with an intervention through SPHE in 3rd year
- Supporting students in counselling sessions that may be at risk of early school leaving.
- Identifying and referring students who may be at risk to themselves or who are experiencing personal crisis.
- Providing counselling support to all students, whether it be personal, social, educational or career based.
- Being present at parent/guardian teacher meetings, to offer support to parents/ guardians and to inform them of how and when they can make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Facilitating work experience and/or work shadowing for Transition Year Programme (TYP) to help form a solid basis upon which students can confirm career and/or course choices.
- Facilitating students to develop and progress their career plans through ongoing exploration and feedback.
- Assisting the full development of each student's potential
- Helping students grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem.
- Preparing students to manage the successful transition to higher or further education, training and/employment.
- Helping students to identify their own key motivating factors.
- Preparing adolescents for successful transition into adulthood.
- Learning about job search and job retention skills.
- Developing research and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, so that students can be self-directed in their career exploration and development (e.g. Qualifax, CareersPortal).
- Learning about the world of work, including employment rights and responsibilities.

- Developing an awareness of the need for life-long learning.
- Developing the skills to become independent and self-motivated learners.
- Providing an environment that facilitates students in developing an understanding of themselves, their values and their future adult roles.
- Assisting students to continue to develop a range of self-management skills, including the ability to access information concerning further study and career options. Such as through:
 - 1) Provision of access to information prepared by public agencies and employers regarding career opportunities.
 - 2) Provision of information about further and higher education and training courses, including entry requirements, course content, workload and progression routes.
 - 3) Establishing and developing linkages with further and higher education institutions and training organisations to facilitate students' decision-making concerning course and institution choice.
 - 4) Provision of opportunities for students to attend events such as career exhibitions, college open days, visits to employers.
 - 5) Meeting relevant role-models such as former students and parents to discuss their chosen career paths.
 - 6) The organisation of mock interview sessions.
- Identifying the needs and expectations of and prepare students for entry to working life and provide information on second-chance educational and training opportunities in the hope of encouraging them to resume their education at a later date.
- Preparing students for a lifestyle change and the increase in personal responsibility that accompanies adulthood. This also involves making students aware of how the adult world they are entering operates and what supports are available to them should they experience difficulties or need personal support.
- Assisting students in carrying out accurate and thorough research on their options and choices after the completion of the Leaving Certificate.
- Encouraging students to build independent learning skills prior to entry to further or higher education in the hope of preventing students experiencing difficulty during the first year of their course.
- Making students aware of the careers and appointments services and student supports at the colleges of further and higher education.

Refer to Planning and Resource Folder for each Year Group for a detailed account of the Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove Guidance Department Syllabus from 1st to 6th Year.

Section 3: Allocation of Guidance Counselling Hours

3.1 The Guidance Counsellor and Subject Coordinator

The Guidance Counsellor and Subject Co-ordinator, in Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove is Rachel McDonnell

3.2 Current Guidance Provision

Formal Guidance

Individual contact of a personal counselling nature and careers/vocational guidance and classroom guidance is delivered on a regular basis to Senior Cycle and Junior Cycle students.

Informal Guidance

This involves liaising with other teaching staff and management to promote cross curricular links and also to develop a Whole School Approach to Guidance Counselling. Meetings with parents/guardians form an integral part of informal guidance. Wellbeing meetings where the student support team meet on a regular basis to ensure students in need of support are in receipt of this support are an important element of this informal guidance. In addition through our Pastoral Care system students are supported by Class Tutors, Deans of Wellbeing, SEN Coordinator, Principal and Deputy Principal

| Number of hours allocated to Guidance: | hours fulltime |
|---|-----------------------|
|---|-----------------------|

Weekly Timetable (Available in Appendix of Folder)

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Guidance Counsellor: | Rachel McDonnell |
| Number of Hours: | 22 Hours |
| Number of weekly timetabled classes: | 8 |
| Number of weekly timetabled classes in other subjects: | 7 from Nov 5 th 4 |
| Number of periods available to meet with students: | 15 from Nov 5 th 19 |
| Number of periods available for administration: | 1 |

Number of periods to be available for subbing: 5

Number of weekly periods scheduled for meetings: 1

Junior Cycle Planning 1

Section 4: Guidance Curriculum:

4.1 Types of Guidance

The Guidance Curriculum may be divided into two components:

Formal Guidance Curriculum

- Classroom Guidance
- Specific Guidance Interventions
- Collaborative Guidance
- Individual Appointments

Informal Guidance Curriculum

4.2 Formal Guidance Curriculum

The formal Guidance Curriculum is delivered via

Classroom Guidance

| Year Group | Number of Class Groups and Students |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1st Years | 11 classes for each of the three small groups of 18 on a modular basis |
| 2nd Years | 27 students for 15 classes twice |
| 3rd Years | No timetabled class - Study skills intervention in November and in February/as appropriate |
| Transition Years | 1 class per week for each class group |
| 5th Years | 1 class per week for each class group |
| 6th Years | 1 class per week for each class group |

[1st Year Planning and Resources for each class group](#)

[2nd Year Planning and Resources](#)

[3rd Year Planning and Resources](#)

[4th Year Planning and Resources](#)

[5th Year Planning and Resources](#)

[6th Year planning and Resources](#)

(See Appendix)

Specific Guidance Interventions

A number of specific guidance interventions take place at both Junior and Senior Cycle.

Junior Cycle

Pre-Entry Stage

Open School: An Invitation is issued to 6th class girls and their parents to visit the school campus and meet key personnel. School tours are led by 5th year students.

Meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal: All prospective students and their parents are invited to a meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal

Assessment: Entrance test and assessment of pupil's academic profile. The CAT4 Level E, as well as tests in Irish, English and Maths are administered by the SEN Department and help inform class groupings and SEN planning for the academic year.

Contact with Primary School Staff: The Guidance Counsellor liaises with primary school principals and teachers 1st year Planning and Resources Folder

First Year Induction Programme

The Guidance Department co-ordinates in collaboration with Management, the Dean of Wellbeing for Junior Students, Tutors, SEN Co-ordinator and SPHE co-ordinator a First Year Induction Programme [First Year Induction Programme Plan and Resources](#).

This is supported throughout first year through an 11 class module in Guidance delivered throughout the course of the year and by individual meetings for all first year students during the first term with a focus on personal, academic and career aspirations.

Mentoring System

Class prefects and 5th Mentors work closely with small groups of 1st year throughout the year. [1st Mentors; Roles, Responsibilities, Resources](#)

First Year Welcome Evening for Parents

A 1st Year Welcome Evening organised by the Deputy Principal in collaboration with the Guidance Service and the Dean of Junior Students takes place in early September, for parents of 1st Year students. This involves members of School leadership team, the Dean of Junior students, the Guidance Counselling Service, Resource/Learning Support/Special Educational Needs (SEN), Chair of Assessment and Learning Board of Studies, Prefects, Mentors and representatives from the Parents Council. During the 1st Year Welcome Evening, parents are given input in the above areas and are given an overview of life in first year. The role of the Guidance Counsellor is to at this evening is give parents an understanding of the Guidance Service thus to encourage communication between home and school and to bring parents through some of the typical concerns and issues of 1st year students. [First Year Welcome Evening Folder](#)

Senior Cycle

Subject Choice at Senior Cycle

- Throughout Transition Year, students are provided with opportunities to study all subjects that will be offered at Senior Cycle.
- In Transition Year students sit the CAT administered by the SEN department, the results of which are shared by the SEN department with students and parents via letter.
- In December Transition Year, TY students attend a presentation on the Leaving Certificate Examination programme and on Further and Higher Education Options. This is followed up in careers classes in the computer room with the Guidance Counsellor where students research subject curricula and entry requirements for specific courses.
- In January Transition Year students attend a Senior Cycle Subject Information Afternoon, where each Subject Department representative is allocated a short duration of time to present a summary of their subject. Students complete a worksheet after each subject input.
- Based on feedback from the 2018 subject choice presentation, this year will also include time for a brief description from students of what it is like to be a Senior Student (e.g. 5th and/or 6th Year), who is presently studying the particular subject. Prospective students are then allocated five minutes to ask questions of both the subject teacher and senior students. Every effort is made to standardise the presentations to ensure fairness of representation.
- Parents attend a subject choice presentation which covers topics such as; who to consult with, core (4) and optional (3) subjects, hurdles to third level education, the points system, NUI (National University of Ireland) matriculation requirements, ICT resources and closes with a question and answer session. In early February students make an open choice ranking their five preferred subjects in genuine order of preference. The subjects are then blocked and students then choose one subject from each block.

- Every effort is made to ensure that the maximum number of student preferences are met.
- Once the student preferences are issued, students are encouraged to avail of a one-to-one counselling appointment with the Guidance Counsellor, particularly if they are experiencing difficulty regarding with the selection of Senior Cycle subjects or if they are unhappy with the outcome of the process.
- Parent/Guardians are required to take ultimate responsibility for the choices adopted by their daughters. Further feedback will be sought from the class of 2020 regarding the subject choice process in November 2018 in order to improve the process for the 2021 cohort. [TY Subject Choice and Resources Folder](#)

CAO Information evening for 6th year parents

[CAO Information Evening Parents Folder](#)

Collaborative Guidance Junior and Senior Cycle

Study skills are taught through SPHE classes from 1st – 3rd Year in conjunction with the SPHE Co-ordinator/SPHE teachers, members of the Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Resource Department and the Guidance Counselling Service.

The Cognitive Ability Tests are organised by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator. CAT4 are administered to in-coming 1st Year students and the CAT 4 level G are administered to Transition Year Students. The current testing procedures are under review. See Section 9 of the plan.

Wellbeing - Framework - Appendix I link

[Link to wellbeing documents](#)

Individual contact involving personal, educational and career counselling as appropriate

- All 6th year students have a timetabled 1:1 meeting with the Guidance Counsellor before Christmas and may make appointments as required.
- All 5th year students have a timetabled 1:1 meeting with the Guidance Counsellor during the final term and may make appointments as required.
- All 1st year students have a 1:1 meeting with the Guidance Counsellor during the first term.

- All 2nd year and 3rd year students make appointments as required.
- Individual Transition Year student appointments are prioritised throughout the subject choice process.

4.3 Informal Guidance Curriculum

The informal Guidance Curriculum consists of liaising with other teaching staff, management, the Student Support Team, class teachers, Deans of Wellbeing and all other relevant non-teaching staff to promote cross curricular links and to enhance the development of a whole school approach in relation to the delivery of the Guidance Plan. Meeting with parents/guardians also forms an integral part of the formal/informal Guidance Curriculum.

Liaising with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) personnel promotes close collaboration between the two Departments. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) require particular access to appropriate guidance.

4.4 Grouping of Students

Students participate in the Guidance Programme in their Year Group/Class Group/small groups or individually. Class groups are made up of a maximum of 30 students. The grouping of students on a mixed ability basis, in so far as possible. The Guidance Programme is delivered on the basis that within any one class or year group, there are students with a wide range of abilities, family circumstances, traditions and diverse needs, therefore, the Guidance Counsellor is required to be cognisant of, and sensitive to the needs, of students in any one group. As a result, it is necessary to use various teaching and learning styles, etc., in the classroom and to develop collaborative relationships with the School Leadership Team, Deans, the Student Support Team, Programme Co-ordinators and class teachers throughout the school, so as to be as well informed as possible about the students in her classes and care.

4.5 Methodologies

The methodologies used by the Guidance Counsellor in delivering the educational and career component of guidance include:

- **Didactic methods:** Learners are given the information, shown or told something.
- **Participative methods:** Learners learn by doing, examining and practising.

- **Experiential methods:** Learners learn by acknowledging and processing personal and value laden experience.
- **Experience Based methods:** Learners engage in work, contact people and assume roles.
- **Reflective Practice:** Learners reflect in and on learning through a variety of means including creative means.
- **Narrative Methods:** Learners examine the processes by which they make meaning and self-define in order to develop alternative narratives of self thus to enable and empower them.

4.5 Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning AFL Strategies

- Group work
- Self-assessment
- Individual reflection
- Student created problems
- Find the false statement / misconception check
- Open and closed ended questions
- Quizzes
- Student summary
- 3-2-1
- Peer instruction
- Etc.

Through the use of various methodologies the Guidance Counsellor recognises and values that students learn in different ways and endeavours to cater for the various learning styles and needs of students. Equally the Guidance Counsellor engages in consistent reflective practice in order to best meet the needs of her students.

4.6 Range and Variety of Resources Employed by the Guidance Counsellor

A wide range and variety of resources are employed in the work of the Guidance Counsellor including:

- **Personnel**
- **Facilities**
- **Materials**
- **External resources**

Personnel

The Guidance Programme is an integral part of the school curriculum and as such involves the **whole school community**. The *Guidance Counselling Service* consults and liaises with the following key personnel, in the planning and development of the programme.

- Guidance Counsellor
- Principal/Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- Deputy Principal/Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)
- Board of Management (BOM)
- Pastoral Care Team (Deans and Tutors)
- Subject teachers
- Subject and Department Co-ordinators
- CSPE and SPHE teachers
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Co-ordinator
- School secretary and administrative staff
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator
- NEPS Psychologist
- Resource personnel
- Student Support Team
- Learning Support Teachers
- Head-Girl, Deputy Head Girl and Prefects
- 5th year mentors
- Student Council
- Parents' Council
- Students
- Ancillary staff

Facilities

- Guidance Counselling Room; with computer, internet connection, printer and phone.
- Guidance library unit in the Guidance room; stocked with various guidance resources, information booklets and college prospectuses.
- Computer room with internet connection and digital projector.
- Use of classroom, common room or hall for guest speakers
- Guidance page connected to school website

Materials

- Reach+ workbook
- Guidance Wall
- Laptop for guest speakers/student and parent presentations
- School intercom
- Lockable filing cabinets and lockable storage, for the safe-keeping of records
- Posters (e.g. National Framework of Qualifications)
- Sculpting stones

Text Resources

- Guidance bookshelf – copies of various prospectuses (e.g. Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), U.K. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Further Education/PLC prospectuses, Teagasc, etc.) and Alert Lists.
- The Guidance Counsellor's Handbook (online) - NCGE
- Directory of Leaving Certificate Entry Requirements (IGC)
- The Institute of Guidance Counsellors Yearbook and Diary (IGC)
- Our Lady's Grove, Jesus and Mary College School Journal
- NUI Matriculation Regulations booklet and summary sheet
- Nursing and Midwifery Careers booklet; *Nursing/Midwifery – A Career For You* (NMBI)
- HEAR and DARE Application Guides and Workbooks
- REACH+ Student Workbook (CareersPortal.ie)
- Senior Cycle Guidance Folders – 5th and 6th Year class work and handouts that are compiled over the two years of the Senior Cycle.
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools
- Guidance Counselling Core Competencies & Professional Practice (IGC)

Websites

- Qualifax: www.qualifax.ie
- Careersportal: www.careersportal.ie
- Scoilnet: www.scolinet.ie
- Fáilte Ireland: www.failteireland.ie
- Student Finance: www.heai.ie/funding-governance-performance/funding/student-finance/
- National Framework of Qualifications: www.nfq.ie
- SKOOL.IE: www.skool.ie
- CAO: www.cao.ie
- UCAS: www.ucas.com

- Department of Education and Skills: www.education.ie
- NCGE: www.ncge.ie
- IGC: www.igc.ie
- Mocks.ie: www.mocks.ie
- Student Universal Support Ireland: www.susi.ie
- Individual college websites (e.g. University College Dublin [www.ucd.ie], Dublin Institute of Technology etc.

External

- Career Exhibition – Higher Options in the RDS
- Careers Fair in conjunction with local schools *Choices 2018*
- UCD Leaving Certificate Weekend Revision Workshops
- UCD Summer School
- Maynooth University Summer School
- UCC Law Academy One Day “Taster” Session
- Open Days in various Higher Education Institutions and Colleges of Further Education
- Guest speakers from various Higher Education Institutions (e.g. Dublin City University, University College Dublin) and Colleges of Further Education (e.g. Dundrum College of Further Education)
- Past Pupils
- Work experience placements (e.g. connection with Parents Council)

Outside Agency Expertise

The support of outside agency personnel is crucial to ensuring the delivery of a comprehensive Guidance Programme. Therefore, networking is an integral part of the Guidance Counsellors working life. The Guidance Counsellor liaises with:

- Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC)
- Guidance colleagues in the Dublin South Branch of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) and in other schools.
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Tusla – Child and Family Agency (via the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)/Principal).
- Voluntary Organisations (e.g. Barnardos)
- Admission/School Liaison Officers/Access Officers/HEAR and DARE Personnel in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

- Social Workers
- G.P.s
- An Garda Síochána
- National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)
- Department of Education and Skills
- Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) - (e.g. Suzanne Graham: Health and Wellbeing).

Section 5: Provision for Health and Safety requirements

5.1 Personal, Educational and Career Counselling

The Counselling Service in the school is based on empowering students to make effective decisions, solve problems, address their behaviours, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing. Such type of situations may be resolved using:

- (a) **Personal Counselling**
- (b) **Educational Counselling**
- (c) **Career Counselling**

Counselling is a key element of the school **Guidance Programme** and each student is entitled to “access to appropriate guidance” in accordance with the Education Act (1998).

The Student Support Team, Deans of wellbeing, class tutors, Management, SPHE teachers and subject teachers, play a central role in the delivery of the **Guidance Programme**, by helping to highlight students who may be struggling for various reasons.

5.2 Appointments and Referrals

Personal Counselling Appointments and Referrals

Personal Counselling Appointments may arise for a variety of reasons including:

- Teacher may be concerned about a student and refer them to the Guidance Counsellor.
- Student Support Team may make a referral.
- Parent/Guardian can have concerns about their daughter and may require some intervention by the Guidance Counsellor.
- Student may wish to self-refer.
- Peer referral

There are multiple reasons why a student may feel the need to access counselling including:

- Personal difficulty
- Coping skills
- Making decisions or choices
- Relationship problems
- Family issues
- Poor self-esteem
- Bullying

- Self-harm
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Existential issues

Personal counselling appointments are arranged with students as soon as it is possible. If the student feels the need to speak to the Guidance Counsellor urgently, the Guidance Counsellor will schedule an appointment immediately and on the same day.

Educational Counselling Appointments

Educational appointments can be made by students, or the Guidance Counsellor or subject teachers may refer a student. These type of appointments can include:

- CAO/UCAS information regarding students applying to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland/ U.K.
- Subject Choice for Senior Cycle
- Change in subject level and the possible consequences associated with such.
- Study skills and time management

Career Counselling Appointments

Career counselling appointments typically involve:

- Empowering students to transcend fixed notions of self in order to enable them to explore multiple paths and possibilities thus to develop alternative narrative of
- Assisting the student to establish connections between their interests, aptitudes and personality, though discussion and interpretation of results of Interest/Aptitude/Personality Tests.
- Providing students with information regarding college requirements and what subjects/levels/grades/points are required for their chosen course/career..
- Discussion with students about particular jobs and what is involved in the profession.
- Discussion regarding possible future options after the Leaving Certificate.

All 6th year students attend a 1:1 Career Counselling appointment before Christmas of the first semester with follow-up appointments made as required.

All 5th year students attend a 1:1 Career Counselling appointment after Easter of the last term with follow-up appointments made as required.

5.3 Appointment System

To ensure the safe and effective delivery of the **Guidance Programme**, an appointments system for one-to-one personal/educational/careers counselling exists. An open door policy operates for students who wish to make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor.

- Appointments can be made by students at any time throughout the school day and week (e.g. during morning coffee break or lunch time, by requesting to see the Guidance Counsellor at the school office, after a Guidance class, etc.).
- The procedure for making an appointment is clearly explained by the Guidance Counsellor to all 1st Year students (during an introductory Guidance class) and parents/guardians at the 1st Year Parents Evening).
- At the start of the school year, The Guidance Counsellor attends the beginning of year assemblies with each year groups and reminds students how they can access the Guidance Counselling Service. Students are also shown how they can make an appointment, through signs which are posted on the door of the Guidance Room. Students can also email the Guidance Counsellor to request an appointment.
- Appointments are made in consultation with the student to reduce disruption. The class teacher at the appointed time is required to give the student permission to attend by signing the appointment slip. If the teacher does not give permission, or the student cannot attend the appointment for various reasons, the appointment can be rescheduled for another time.
- If the Guidance Counsellor is not present in the Guidance Room at a time when the student presents to make an appointment, the student can opt to put their name and class, only, on a piece of paper and place it in the envelope on the door of the Guidance room. The Guidance Counsellor links in with the student as soon as is possible.
- Occasionally a counselling appointment may over-extend its allocated time. During such an occurrence, and out of courtesy to the next teacher, students are issued a note for the subject teacher.
- For health and safety reasons, the door to the Guidance Counsellor's room has a viewer's window.

Counselling can only take place if the student is willing to participate and after an initial referral, it is always the student's choice whether or not they wish to continue. At all times it is the policy of the Guidance Counselling Service to respect and value the student who is receiving counselling and to provide the student with a safe, accepting and non-judgmental environment, where they feel listened to and understood.

Attendance at Career Events

Students wishing to attend career events outside of the school premises (e.g. Higher Options), are issued with a letter clearly outlining the purpose, location, date and arrangements that have been put in place for the event. An attached permission slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the Guidance Counsellor by a set date.

5.4 Referrals

If a Dean/Tutor feels that a particular student from their year group is in need of counselling, they refer the student in question to the Guidance Counsellor. Referrals can also come from recommendations by a class/SPHE teacher, the Student Support Team, Management or an outside agency. Referrals can be made formally via email or informally verbally. The Guidance Counsellor keeps a record of all referrals made. The Guidance Counsellor meets the referred student as soon as it is possible.

[See Appendix for Referral Procedures and Pathway documents](#)

Types of Referrals

There are two types of referral:

- **Referrals made to the Guidance Counsellor**

These are referrals made by Deans of Wellbeing, subject teachers, school management, the Board of Management, the Student Support Team and parents who feel some intervention by the Guidance Counsellor is desirable. Students may also self-refer. It is vital to remember that the voluntary participation of the referred student must be respected by all concerned.

- **Referrals made by the Guidance Counsellor**

In cases where a student requires specialist support, the Guidance Counsellor will become involved in assessing the student's needs and when necessary, arrange a referral to an appropriate outside agency (i.e. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)).

Policies relating to Health and Safety

The following school policies relate to the provision for health and safety requirements:

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Critical Incident Policy
- Discipline Policy
- School Trips Policy

Section 6: Reporting Procedures and Protocols for meetings

6.1 Confidentiality

It is vital that the relationship between the student and Guidance Counsellor is built on trust and professionalism. The Guidance Counsellor will take all reasonable measures to ensure that consultation with students takes place in an appropriate and private environment. A 'Do Not Disturb' sign is placed beside the handle of the Guidance Room door during one-to-one counselling appointments to minimise disruption and preserve the privacy of the client.

All reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about students are taken by the Guidance Counsellor. The Guidance Counsellor informs the student about the **limits of confidentiality**. The student is assured of the Guidance Counsellor's professional discretion in dealing with their personal issues. Disclosures of information to an appropriate third party may be made where it is deemed necessary, for example:

- To protect the best interests of the student.
- Where the student is in danger.
- To protect the interests of society.
- To safeguard the welfare of another student.
- Where the student is a danger to another student.
- Where the Guidance Counsellor is required to by law.
- For the purpose of professional consultation or supervision

The Guidance Counsellor discusses information about students only for professional purposes and solely with those who are clearly entitled to be consulted. Information is managed in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. Disclosure is only made to those the Guidance Counsellor believes should know or by law are entitled to know. The Guidance Counsellor takes all reasonable steps to ensure that students give consent in relation to the investigation of their issue.

[IGC Code of Ethics](#)

[Data Procedures in Our Lady's Grove](#)

Limits of Confidentiality

At the beginning of each counselling session, the student is informed about the **limits of confidentiality** (i.e. what is discussed will be kept in confidence unless the Guidance Counsellor believes the student is at risk or is a danger to herself or others.) In such cases a referral must be made to appropriate people, as it is the legal requirement.

6.2 Procedure for reporting an at-risk student

- The DLP or DDLP will be informed if a student is at risk and where necessary other personnel may be informed. If it is determined that it is in the student's best interest to inform a parent/guardian, or teacher, of a particular difficulty, this will usually be done with the student's prior knowledge and optimally with her consent.
- As the referral system can in some cases take time to be put in place, the Guidance Counsellor continues to offer the student on-going support, while the student awaits specialist help. When the student becomes engaged with the outside support services, the Guidance Counsellor will continue to meet with the student and offer support, if desired.
- In cases where a report has been made to an outside agency (e.g. Tusla), the parents/guardians of the student will generally be made aware of the concern being reported, unless there are exceptional circumstances such as in the case of physical/sexual/neglect/abuse by a member of the family, under which circumstances, the HSE Child Protection and Welfare guidelines are followed.

The procedure for reporting an at risk student to an outside agency (e.g. Tusla) is as follows:

- Guidance Counsellor/Dean, etc. **reports the disclosure to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) - the Principal /Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP) - Deputy Principal**, of Our Lady's Grove, Jesus and Mary College.
- The DLP/DDLP makes **contact with and informs the student's parents/guardians** of the disclosure.
- The DLP/DDLP will **inform the parent/guardian that the *Tusla - Standard Report Form (for reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns)* will be sent to the Principal Social Worker**. However, this may depend on the nature of the disclosure (e.g. where the parent/guardian is the cause for concern).

- If there is a disagreement between the DLP and GC the GC as a mandated person will act in accordance with the requirements of the Child Protection Legislation.
- **Parents/Guardians are advised to bring their daughter to a G.P. as soon as possible.**
- Where a visit to a G.P. is recommended, the **DLP/DDLP will request that the parent/guardian report back to them as soon as possible with an update.**

As per legal requirement, the name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) (the school Principal) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) (the Deputy Principal) are clearly displayed on a sign, located in the main reception area of the school.

All school staff have completed the required child protection training and have a full understanding of their legal responsibilities and the actions they must take as mandated personnel.

[Child Safeguarding Statement](#)

[Referral Procedure and Resources](#)

Section 7: GDPR and Record Keeping Procedures

7.1 GDPR

All record keeping is in line with school policy and is GDPR compliant. Records are kept in a locked filing cabinet and in the case of counselling notes records are ‘split’ in line with IGC recommendations and best practice. Records are factual and accurate. **This section in the plan is in development as we await input from the IGC, CPD from IGC and sample templates produced by the IGC. IGC Handbook available in Appendix.**

All personal counselling files are stored in a lockable and secure filing cabinet and are retained for a minimum of 7 years.

7.2 Protocol for Meetings

- **Protocol for meeting with students**

The same guidance appointment card is used for all types of one-to-one counselling appointments (i.e. Personal, Educational and Career). The appointment card states the student’s name, appointment day, date and time. The teacher releasing the student from class, signs the card, indicating permission is granted. If a student is delayed or late attending next class, they are issued with the *Student Delay Card*, which notes the class the student is late for and the time they were released from their appointment with the Guidance Counsellor.

- **Protocol for meeting with Groups of students**

On occasion it may be necessary and appropriate for the Guidance Counsellor to meet with a group of students. The same protocol is followed under such circumstances (e.g. each student is issued with an appointment card which must be signed by the subject teacher that students would normally have at the time of the appointment. The Guidance Counsellor ‘contracts’ with the group and informs them of the limits of confidentiality. The students establish their own set of rules for the group (e.g. whatever is discussed by the group remains between the members present in the room).

- **Protocol for meeting with Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians may make appointments with the Guidance Counsellor by telephoning the school, via email, with the Guidance Counsellor in person during Parent-Teacher Meetings, or after Parent Information Evenings. Appointments are usually conducted during the school day. When the Guidance Counsellor wishes to arrange a meeting with a parent, she will

telephone the parent to arrange a time that is mutually suitable to both, contact the parent via email if phone contact does not occur or consult with the parents during a Parent-Teacher Meeting, etc. On occasion, the Guidance Counsellor may request that another member of staff (e.g. Year Head or a member of management) be present at the meeting.

The student is normally invited for whole or part of the meeting with the approval of parties attending the meeting. This gives the student a sense of ownership, responsibility and inclusion in the process and in the outcomes of the meeting. Notes are kept of all parent/guardian meetings by the Guidance Counsellor.

7.3 Parent/Guardian Evening Information Presentations

Parents/guardians are invited, by letter, to a number evening information presentations where they are addressed by a combination of staff including the Guidance Counsellor, Programme Coordinators, the Principal, Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator and the Dean responsible for the particular year group.

- **CAO Presentation to Parents/Guardians of 6th Year Students about Third Level Education in Ireland**, with particular focus on the CAO Application System. This talk is held in December/January each year.
- **Senior Cycle Subject Choice Talk for Parents/Guardians of Transition Year Students** This talk focuses on subject choice options for the Senior Cycle.
- **First Year Parent Welcome evening** in the first term.

The Guidance Counsellor may also as appropriate and in conjunction with Management, the Parents Council and other interested parties such as the Students Council organize one off talks on internet safety, protecting your online reputation etc.

7.4 Parent/Guardian Teacher Conferences

The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with parents/guardians at Parent Teacher Conferences. If the Guidance Counsellor or Parent/Guardian feels that there is insufficient time or privacy to fully discuss any concerns, an appointment will be made with Guidance Counsellor for a mutually suitable time.

7.5 School Events

Meetings at school events (e.g. Open Night, school masses, graduation evenings, etc.), provide opportunities to get to know parents/guardians in an informal relaxed setting, helping to forge links with parents/guardians and other family members.

7.6 Parents Council

The Guidance Counsellor welcomes opportunities to meet with the Parents Council in order to develop a network of possible work placements for students in TY.

7.7 Past Pupils

The Guidance Counsellor works to connect with Past Pupils in order to set up a mentoring relationship with current students in Senior Cycle who wish to connect with someone in an industry or course of study that they are interested in. A database of past pupils willing to give of their time and wisdom is currently being built by the Guidance Counsellor.

7.8 External Meetings

Barnardos, or the Health Service Executive (HSE) may request the attendance of the Guidance Counsellor at Case or Family Conferences. The Guidance Counsellor will normally attend these meetings if possible. Such meetings provide an opportunity to meet parents and other professionals. The welfare of the students is the shared goal of all present.

Section 8: Current Guidance Procedures

8.1 Subject Discontinuation, change of level, change of subject

- **Students Discontinuing a Subject**

On occasion, a student may decide to discontinue the study of a subject (e.g. foreign language) during the school year. Such a decision may be reached when a student feels under undue pressure, as a result of the demands of a large workload; such as in the case of a student with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Dropping a subject is a serious decision and one which must not be taken lightly. Prior to any change being made, the student is encouraged to discuss the implications of such a decision with relevant personnel such as the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator and the Guidance Counsellor, who clearly outline possible associated consequences (e.g. the possible narrowing of options in relation to entry to certain courses in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).) The student is also encouraged to discuss the decision with their parents/guardians, who must agree to sign a parental/guardian consent form, which is returned and kept on file by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator.

- **Students Changing a Subject**

Sometimes a 5th Year student may wish to change from a subject they opted for in Spring of Transition Year. Each request is treated on a case by case basis and may be facilitated on certain grounds (e.g. class size permitting, time of year etc.). Students are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the subject teachers and with the Guidance Counsellor before reaching a final decision. The Guidance Counsellor also consults with the relevant subject teachers. After consultation with the Guidance Counsellor, if the student still wishes to proceed with the change and if it is possible to facilitate her, she must notify the Deputy Principal, who organises the subject transfer, conditions permitting. (Form - Appendix)

- **Students Changing a Subject Level**

If a student wishes to change a subject level during the school year (e.g. from Higher to Ordinary Level), the first port of call is the subject teacher, who will advise in this regard. The student is advised to meet with the Guidance Counsellor to discuss the implications of such a change (e.g. specific subject requirements for entry to Third Level, points, etc.) The student is also encouraged to discuss the change of level with their parents/guardians. If the decision is taken to change level, a change of subject level form must be completed (appendix). Where a change in level results in a change of class/teacher the subject

teacher informs the school secretary so that the appropriate changes to the roll are made on VSWARE

8.2 Study Skills and Junior and Senior Cycle

Study Skills are taught to both Junior and Senior Cycle students through a combination of SPHE classes (from 1st – 3rd Year), in conjunction with SPHE teachers, Subject teachers, the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator and the Guidance Counsellor.

Senior Cycle Study Skills Workshops are carried out by the Guidance Counsellor on a modular basis throughout the Senior Cycle during Career Classes. The SPHE teachers support this through study skills classes in SPHE.

Reflecting on study skills habits and fostering personal responsibility are key goals of all Guidance related study skills activities.

8.3 Guest Speakers

A number of guest speakers from various Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) and Colleges of Further Education, are invited by the Guidance Counsellor to address Senior Students about their organisation, courses, facilities, scholarships, etc. Students are issued with a *Guest Speaker Survey* at the beginning of the year in order to marry their interests with the selected speakers. Nonetheless the goal is to expose the students to a wide variety of options in order to open up perspectives.

The speakers also include women (past pupils and others) from a diverse range of areas who tell their career story from school to current situation in order to constantly emphasise to students the circuitous and multiple pathways available to them.

The talks take place during a Guidance class. However, some students are timetabled for different subjects at the same time, so students must seek, in advance, the permission of subject teachers to attend the talk. A list of talks, including times and dates, is circulated to staff at the end of September to minimise disruption. The Guidance Counsellor is present at all talks. Students are asked to provide feedback to the Guidance Counsellor, during their next Guidance class.

From 2018/2019 students will complete a short survey at the end of the year to review the talks in order to inform planning for the following school year.

8.4 Mock Interview Preparation

As part of the **Guidance Programme**, the Guidance Counsellor assists students in preparing for interviews. Among the reasons students may be required to participate in an interview are to gain admission to a Post Leaving Certificate Course (PLC), or to search for employment. It is vital students are given the best chance of succeeding, by being prepared for the interview (e.g. knowing what to wear and how to present themselves; being provided with a list of sample questions; having the experience of rehearsing the delivery of appropriate answers.) Through role play, any student who wishes to is given the opportunity to participate in a mock interview, with feedback provided by the Guidance Counsellor.

8.5 College Open Days, Career Exhibitions, Revision Programmes

As part of the **Guidance Programme**, senior students are strongly encouraged to attend college Open Days which are organised by Higher Educational Institutions and Colleges of Further Education. The school views Open Days as an excellent way to meet and speak with lecturers and current students, discuss courses and discover what college life is like. 5th Year students and their parents/guardians are informed about Higher Options, in writing during May. The Guidance Counsellor prepares students for Higher Options in class and accompanies the students to Higher Options where they complete the Higher Options booklet in order to maximize the opportunities Higher Options provide, gain valuable knowledge and awareness of a variety of courses and professions, by having the opportunity to speak with course directors and current students.

Higher Option Worksheets

The **Guidance Counselling Service** encourages attendance at the University College Dublin (UCD) Shadowing Day, for eligible 5th Year students in February as well as other Summer Schools. The Guidance Website is constantly updated with news of Career related events and students are also encourage to follow Grove Guidance @GroveGuidance the new Guidance Twitter account for links they may find helpful.

8.6 New Students transferring to Our Lady's Grove, Jesus and Mary College.

The Principal, Deputy Principal, Deans of Wellbeing and Guidance Counsellor are involved with new students transferring into the school. Parents/guardians are contacted to arrange a meeting with the Principal to discuss their daughter's transfer. The student is introduced to her Dean of Wellbeing and the Guidance Counsellor and is encouraged to check in with both parties and let them know how she is settling in; and to discuss any difficulties which may

arise. Every effort is made to ensure the new student is able to take up her desired subjects (class numbers permitting). When the student has made their subject selection, the administration office puts together a package for the new student, including their class timetable, list of teachers, insurance form, locker, evening study form, uniform requirements, school journal, etc. and informs teachers of the student's arrival.

8.7 Early School Leavers

Although relatively uncommon, if a student decides to leave school before they complete their Junior or Leaving Certificate, they must make an appointment to meet with the Principal and Guidance Counsellor, to look at the alternative options available to them (e.g. Youthreach). An appointment may also be arranged between the Guidance Counsellor and the student's parents/guardians, with their daughter present, to discuss the implications of leaving school before they complete their formal education.

8.8 Guidance Wall, Student Support Notice Board

Guidance Wall

The Guidance Wall is located on the corridor, up from and opposite the Guidance Counsellor's Room. It displays information relating to:

- UCAS
- CAO
- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and College of Further Education Open Days
- Scholarships
- HEAR and DARE
- How to make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor
- Career talks
- Aptitude Test preparation courses
- Exemptions
- SUSI grants, etc.

Student Support Notice Board

In the 2018/2019 academic year, there will be a Student Support noticeboard/area positioned on a wall, in an area frequently passed by students. The noticeboard will contain leaflets and

information relating to various issues that students may experience (e.g. depression, stress, eating disorders, etc.) It will also display the contact information of the supports that are available to students generally (e.g. Service (FDYS) Wexford, ChildLine, Teen-Line Ireland, Bodywhys, BeLonG To, etc.) The exact title of the board and the nature of material included on it will be negotiated and agreed through the student council.

8.9 Designated Liaison Person and (Deputy) Designated Liaison Person (DLP/DDLP) Sign

As required by law, the name of the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person are clearly displayed, outside the office, in the school’s main reception area.

8.10 Tracking System of Past Pupils

From September 2018, willing final year students are asked to provide the Guidance Counsellor with contact details so they can be contacted in September/October, following the completion of their second level education. This is a reflection of the interest the school shows towards the development of its students. Tracking also serves as a way of identifying disappointed or struggling students; who may require and benefit from further guidance support.

Students are asked the following questions as per *‘Location of 6th Year Students Following the Completion of their Second Level Education’*

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Quest. No.1 | What are you doing now? CAO/ PLC/ WORK/ GAP/ OTHER (Please Specify) _____ |
| Quest. No.2 | What is the title of your course? (For example, ‘Bachelor of Arts Degree’) _____ |
| Quest. No.3 | What level is your course? Level 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 |
| Quest. No.4 | What Institution are you studying at? (For example, ‘UCD’) _____ |

The information is gathered and collated by the Guidance Counsellor and the results of the final destination of 6th Year students are displayed using a set of pie charts (e.g. the percentage of 6th Year students who proceeded to University, an Institute of Technology, a Post Leaving Certificate Course (PLC), employment, a gap year, etc.)

The statistics are available to the Board of Management, staff, students and parents on request.

The Guidance Counsellor also provides the BOM with an overview of attainment levels across subjects.

Section 9: Testing - Currently with Karen for checking

9.1 Assessment Tests

The administration of formal assessment instruments is currently restricted to staff who are specifically trained in the selection, administration and interpretation of them.

The SEN Department currently facilitates and administers three formal assessment tests in Jesus and Mary College, Our Lady's Grove. The Guidance Service has access to the results of these assessments.

Testing of Incoming 1st Year Students

The purpose of assessing in-coming 1st Year students, is primarily to identify the learning needs of the students which may or may not be apparent to date and to ensure the most compatible groupings suitable to the cohort and the individuals in it setting. It is used by the SEN department to identify students performing below the 10th percentile in verbal/quantitative scores to ensure access to Learning Support and to identify possible learning needs previously not identified.

- Assessment testing of incoming 1st Year students is organised and facilitated by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator. This helps to ensure that necessary provisions are put in place for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) (e.g. visual or hearing impairment) and forms the basis for the division of classes based on the needs of that cohort.
- Incoming 1st Year students are assessed on the last Saturday in January.
- The Cognitive Abilities Test 4 (CAT4) Level E, as per the Department of Education and Skills list, '*Assessment Instruments (Including Tests and Web-based Resources) Approved for Use for Guidance and/or Learning Support in Post-Primary Schools*' is used for assessment.
- In September of First Year, the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) 3A is administered along with the Mathematics Assessment for Learning and Teaching (MaLT 12) Numeracy Test. The details of these results are used by the SEN department to further develop a profile of students and the SEN department shares the results with the English and Maths department.

Based on this information provided by the SEN Coordinator and information from the school passports, and other information provided by parents/guardians or the Primary

School, the Guidance Counsellor, Dean of wellbeing for Junior Students and SEN coordinator build the 1st year class groups.

It is school policy that Admission Test results are not made available to parents/guardians. However, where a concern arises, parents are contacted and students' individual needs are discussed. At the end of First Year the SEN department issues a letter to First Year parents with details of the standardized testing done throughout the school year.

- In September of 1st year in English class, all 1st years complete a written paragraph entitled 'First Impressions of First Year'. This is corrected by the English Teacher and then shared with the Guidance Counsellor and SEN coordinator to help identify any students who may have difficulties in any domain. The Guidance Counsellor endeavours to meet with all 1st year students on a 1:1 basis throughout the 1st term.

[1st Year Planning and Resources Folder](#)

Transition Year Testing:

In Transition Year, students sit the CAT 4 level G administered by the SEN Department, the results of which are shared by the SEN department with students and parents via letter and to which the Guidance Counsellor has access.

- All Transition Year students are provided with the opportunity to participate in CAT 4 level G. Current practice has been that students have not been told they have an opt out option, this practice will be reviewed with the SEN department during the 2018/2019 academic year.
- The results of these tests are communicated via letter by the SEN department to Parents of TY students at the subject choice information evening.

During the 2018/2019 academic year the possibility of using the Cambridge and Eirquest suite of exams will be explored and a collaborative decision taken regarding future testing procedures, which testing suite to use if any and how best to communicate the results of testing in order to ensure that the selection, administration and communication of test results best meets the needs of students from both a Guidance and Counselling perspective and Learning Support perspective.

Testing in Second Year

In accordance with the National Strategy on Literacy and Numeracy, students are assessed using the CAT 4 - Level F test in December of 2nd year. The purpose of this testing is to monitor student progress and enable the tracking of students by the SEN department. The New Group Reading Test (3B) and Mathematics Assessment for Learning and Teaching (Malt) 14 are also administered by the SEN department to continue its monitoring of student progress.

Other Assessment Instruments used by the SEN Coordinator

The SEN coordinator also employs a variety of assessment tests in relation to her work and role in supporting students with Special Educational Needs. Such tests include the New Group Reading Test (NGRT), the Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA) and the Wide Range Achievement Test 4 (WRATH 4).

New Group Reading Test

The New Group Reading Test (NGRT) is administered every September to all 1st Year students by the SEN department on a class by class basis. This test is used to determine the reading age of each student. A standard score is also retained. The NGRT is used by the SEN department to help identify students who will require reading intervention/literacy support. The test is administered by the SEN coordinator. The results are communicated in the letter that goes home at the end of first year.

Wide Range Achievement Test 4 (WRAT 4).

The WRAT 4 is used to determine eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE). The test is also used to help determine if a referral to the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) is needed. The SEN coordinator always seeks parental permission in advance of using this test.

The results of the WRAT 4 are available on request and a letter is sent home to explain if a student does or does not meet the criteria for the Reasonable Accommodation they are seeking.

Testing Resources IGC

.9.3 Informal Assessment tests used by the Guidance Counsellor

- When students are in 5th and 6th Year they complete a number of career guidance tests such as the *Career Interest Inventory* and *Rothwell Miller Interest Blank* as part of their weekly Guidance class.

- Senior Students also avail of a number of free tests which are accessible online from websites such as CareersPortal (e.g. Career Exploration Toolbox including an Interest Profiler) and Qualifax (e.g. Interest Assessment).
- Informal assessments can help to support clarification of career and subject choice and highlight the need for individual intervention.

[Testing Resources Folder](#)

Section 10: Student Support Team

10.1 Student Support Team Meetings and Members

Student Support Team Meeting

The Student Support Team meets each Monday for one class period, from -----in the Principal's Office. The meeting is scheduled on the Guidance Counsellor's timetable.

Members of the Student Support Team

The Student Support Team is comprised of:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Deans of wellbeing
- Guidance Counsellor
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator/Resource teacher

The meeting is chaired by the Deputy Principal

10.2 Record Keeping at Student Support Team Meetings

A detailed record is kept of all Student Support Team Meetings, including members in attendance, concerns raised during the meeting and what action plan and measures are to be put in place to deal with such issues.

[Student Support Team Resources Folder](#)

10.3 Student Welfare Meeting

Each Thursday, the Guidance Counsellor sends an email to each of the Deans asking them to submit the names of any students they have met that week using the categories of Educational, Behavioural and Academic. The Guidance Counsellor meets briefly to with the Principal on a Monday at 120 to discuss any student welfare issues. This enables to Guidance Counsellor to prioritise students and allocate 1:1 meetings appropriately as well as ensuring that there is not a crossover of students between various personnel. The Guidance Counsellor and Principal keep a record of these meetings. It also facilitates discussion of issues which may not be appropriate at the student support team meeting.

Section 11: Links with School Staff and Outside Agencies

11.1 Whole School Dimension of Guidance

The following links clearly demonstrate the whole school dimension of Guidance and the collaboration between the **whole school community** and Guidance Counsellor.

11.2 Links with partners and stakeholders

- **Links with Staff**

The Guidance Counsellor links with a wide variety of school staff members throughout the course of the working day.

- **Links with the Principal and Deputy Principal (Management)**

The Guidance Counsellor has regular formal and informal meetings with the Principal/Deputy Principal regarding various issues.

- **Deans of Wellbeing**

The Guidance Counsellor works very closely with the Our Lady's Grove, Jesus and Mary College Deans of Wellbeing. The Guidance Counsellor meets with the Deans on a regular basis, both formally and informally, to discuss the circumstances of students the Deans feel may require support from the Guidance Counsellor; whether personal/social, educational or career based.

- **Links with Social Personal and Health (SPHE) Co-ordinator and SPHE Teachers**

The Guidance Counsellor aims to work closely with the SPHE Coordinator and SPHE teachers. Due to the nature of the subject, SPHE teachers are sometimes in a position where they can identify something that is a cause for concern. SPHE teachers may discuss the issue with the Guidance Counsellor or refer the student, if deemed appropriate. The Guidance Counsellor also supports SPHE teachers with the delivery of topics which are related to guidance.

- **Links with Subject Teachers**

Subject teachers often refer students to the Guidance Counsellor if they notice any major changes in their students (e.g. withdrawal, an unusual deterioration in the student's work or grades). As subject teachers are in regular contact with students, they are an important source of referral for the Guidance Counsellor. This referral is done informally and formally. While the Guidance Counsellor must protect student confidentiality, it is practice in our school for

the Guidance Counsellor to let the subject teacher know that the student is being taken care of without divulging any details regarding the particular issue.

- **Links with Parents/Guardians**

There are many ways in which the Guidance Counsellor establishes and maintains links with the parents/guardians of students such as:

- Parent/Guardian Appointments with the Guidance Counsellor – All parents/guardians are welcome to make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor to discuss matters relating to their daughters (e.g. personal/social, educational or career). This welcome is extended at parental gatherings such as Open Night, the 1st Year Parents Information Evening, Junior and Senior Cycle Parent’s Talks, etc. The Guidance Counsellor may also request to make an appointment to meet the parents/guardians of a student (sometimes in conjunction with Management or a Year Head).
- The Guidance Counsellor is present and available at all Parent teacher conferences.
- *CAO Parents Information Evening* is held for 6th Year Parents in **what month?**.
- *Senior Cycle Subject Choice Information Evening* is held in **February**.
- *1st Year Parents Information Evening* takes place in **September**.
- *6th Year Graduation Ceremony* presents a further opportunity to engage with parents/guardians in May.

- **Links with Parents’ Council**

Initial links with the Parents’ Council were made during the 2017/2018 academic year and it is hoped that these links will be strengthened and increased throughout the 2018/2019 year in particular through the creating of a work experience database set up by the Parents’ Council.

- **Links with Student Support Team**

The Guidance Counsellor is a key member of the Student Support Team. A weekly meeting is scheduled in the Principal’s Office with other team members.

- **Links with National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)**

The Guidance Counsellor liaises with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) through the school’s Educational Psychologist. The NEPS Psychologist is a vital source of support to both students, parents and staff. The NEPS Psychologist attends the school on a regular basis, during which time he assesses students, meets with parents/guardians, Management, the Guidance Counsellor and the Special Educational Needs

Coordinator. Referrals are made to the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) as they arise throughout the course of the school year.

- **Links with Schools Liaison and Admissions Officers in Third Level Colleges and Colleges of Further Education**

Each year a variety of guest speakers, including representatives from Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), Colleges of Further Education, Access and Scholarship Departments and past pupils, are invited by the *Guidance Counselling Service* to address Senior Students in Our Lady's Grove, Jesus and Mary College. As well as gaining valuable information, students have the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers and feedback in relation to the talks is generally very positive.

Throughout the year, the Guidance Counsellor is in regular contact with Admissions Officers and individual course directors of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Colleges of Further Education.

- **Links with Access Officers/ HEAR and DARE Personnel**

The Guidance Counsellor regularly engages with Access Officers in multiple Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) through the promotion of various Access Programmes such as HEAR and DARE, UCD Shadowing Day/Summer School and Weekend Revision Workshops in UCD. Students may have unanswered questions about aspects of their application (e.g. a HEAR applicant may question whether their home address qualifies as meeting one of the HEAR indicators) and often the Guidance Counsellor will consult with Access Officers to establish how best to answer such questions.

- **Links with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator/Resource /Learning Support Departments**

The Guidance Counsellor has a particularly close link and relationship with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator. Both parties work collaboratively and meet regularly to try to ensure that students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are supported by the school, in the best possible manner. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator is a regular source of referral to the Guidance Counsellor, as sometimes students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) may encounter higher levels of frustration due to a specific learning difficulty or disability. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator is a valuable source of information regarding various types of Special Educational Needs (SENs). The SEN Coordinator works alongside the Guidance Counsellor by assisting students with the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) application.

The SEN Co-ordinator administers the CAT4 to incoming 1st year students and the CAT to TY students and shares this information with the Guidance Counsellor.

The Guidance Counsellor and Special Educational Needs Coordinator are both members of the Student Support Team.

- **Links with Student Council Coordinator/Student Council and Head Girls**

The Guidance Counsellor facilitates the training of the Student Council and Head Girls in leadership development. The Guidance Counsellor works with the Student Council and the Well Being Prefect to develop a range of interventions to help support and create an atmosphere of openness and connection in our school with the wellbeing of all members of the school community at its core. This year the Guidance Counsellor will also work with a group of 5th year mentors to help support 1st year students. This is a new initiative which we will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

- **Links with Past Pupils**

Past pupils/mature students are always welcome to contact the Guidance Counsellor to discuss their continued education. Contact is established and maintained over the telephone and via email. Common topics that mature students seek assistance with include, application to the Central Applications Office (CAO), Universities Colleges and Admissions Service (UCAS), Post-Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs), applying to repeat subjects as external candidates, etc. Past pupils are invited to return to their former school as guest speakers for present Senior Cycle Students. The contribution of former students is viewed as a valuable resource for the school. The Guidance Counsellor aims to build a database/network of past pupils who would be willing to mentor senior cycle students and those in 1st year in college.

Child Protection

- **Links with Health Service Executive (HSE)/Tusla and Social Workers**

The Guidance Counsellor refers students to Tusla/the Principal Social Worker, via the Deputy Liaison Person (DLP), the Principal. On occasion Social Workers may request a meeting with the Guidance Counsellor to discuss how they feel that she can best support the student (e.g. the provision of personal counselling or educationally related material such as information on Access Programmes, grants, etc.)

- **Links with General Practitioners (GPs) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

If the Guidance Counsellor or Principal/Deputy Principal are concerned about the welfare of a student (e.g. such as in the case of self-harm) the parents/guardians of the student are

contacted and advised to bring their daughter to a GP as soon as possible. Students are also referred by the Guidance Counsellor to GPs as they are in a position to be able to refer students to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), which provides assessment and treatment for young people and their families who are experiencing mental health difficulties. In turn, local GPs often encourage students to avail of the counselling service available through the Guidance Counsellor in school.

- **Links with Voluntary Organisations**

The Guidance Counsellor may act as an advocate on behalf of a student, and assist them in helping to voice their feelings and point of view at Family Conference Meetings.

- **Links with the Local Community and Businesses**

Need to build links here

Section 12: Guidance Related Policies

12.1 Department Policies

12.2 School Policies

The following school policies are related to Guidance:

| Policy Title |
|--|
| • Anti-Bullying Policy |
| • Admission Policy |
| • Critical Incident Policy |
| • Code of behaviour |
| • Health and Safety Policy ? |
| • Homework Policy |
| • Internet Use Policy - Correct Title Acceptable Use? |
| • Relationships and Sexual Education (RSE) Policy |
| • Policy Document on School Trips |
| • Child Protection Policy/Child safeguarding statement |
| • Dignity in the Work place Policy |
| • Policy for the Prevention of Substance Abuse |
| • School Trips Policy |
| • Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy |
| • Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy |
| • Learning Support Policy |
| • Substance Abuse Policy |
| • |

Section 13: Areas of Priority for Development

The Guidance Counsellor is committed to offering a comprehensive and forward orientated *Guidance Counselling Service* to the school community which is sensitive to the changing and diverse needs of the student population. The quality of teaching and learning is integral to the optimum provision of student and school community support in which the Guidance Department is engaged on a daily basis. This demands constant action planning, evaluation and reflection.

13.1 Reflecting on Guidance Planning

This Guidance Plan is a living document that describes the School Guidance Programme and specifies how the guidance needs of students are addressed. It is an integral part of the school's overall School Development Plan.

As the Guidance Plan demonstrates, guidance planning is clearly a whole school activity and draws not only on the experiences of the Guidance Counsellor, but also involves school management, school staff as well as the students and their parents. In order to enhance the planning and programme of Guidance in the school in September 2018 a Whole-School Guidance Planning team will be set up in order to identify the guidance needs of the school and to collaboratively plan the whole-school guidance programme reflecting the guidance needs of students, teachers and parents.

13.2 Areas of Priority for Development

The following is a list of the priority areas for development, which the school would hope to address during the period 2015 – 2020:

- Set up a Guidance Planning team to enhance the collaborative and whole school nature of Guidance 2018/2019
- Review the Guidance plan through the lens of Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework of Practice 2018-2023.
- Review 4th Year Assessment Testing procedures in collaboration with the SEN coordinator
- Develop a Policy on Testing in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and Learning Support Departments.
- Review record keeping procedures and templates in line with GDPR legislation IGC recommendations and best practice
- Revise and up-date Critical Incident Policy. 2018/2019
- Greater promotion of College Awareness Week throughout the school.
- Introduce a Wellbeing week which is supported with ongoing well-being interventions throughout the year and strengthen and improve wellbeing links between departments and the wellbeing board.
- Continue to develop connections and networks with past pupils, parents and local communities in order the develop and OLG network
- Improve the traffic on Guidance website and create a digital presence on Twitter.
- Consistently engage in reflective practice and take part in CPD particularly in counselling skills.

Section 14: Qualifications, Continuous Professional Development, Counselling Supervision

14.1 Professional Qualifications of the Guidance Counsellor

Counsellor successfully completed the Postgraduate Diploma in School Guidance and Counselling in May 2018.

14.1 Membership of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors

The Guidance Counsellor is a registered current member of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC).

14.2 Member of the Psychological Society of Ireland

Pending

14.3 Continuous Professional Development

To maintain qualified membership of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), a chartered member must complete 10 hours of in-service training annually (Code of Ethics of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, 2012). In-career development is essential to the work of the Guidance Counsellor. The Department of Education and Skills supports the provision of in-service for Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) members through the provision of funding.

The Guidance Counsellor attends the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) South Dublin Branch in Blackrock Education Centre. The meetings take place during the afternoon, on the second Tuesday of every month, throughout the school year. Contact with other local Guidance Counsellors assist the practitioner in gaining valuable support, ideas and information, thus contributing to continuous improvements in the Guidance Counselling Service. Branch meetings also provide access to informative and beneficial Continuous Professional Development (CPD) through the organisation and participation in relevant in-service training. Regular attendance at local IGC meetings and Counselling Supervision is facilitated by the school through sensitive timetabling.

The IGC National Conference provides a range of in-service through the provision of workshops and presentations relevant to the work of the Guidance Counsellor.