

**GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING  
SCHOOL PLAN**

**MARYFIELD COLLEGE  
GLANDORE ROAD  
DRUMCONDRA  
DUBLIN 9**

**2005-2008**

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## **Section 1: Rationale and Context**

### **1.1 Overview**

Schools are required in accordance with the Education Act (1998) to “ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance” (*Guidelines for second-level schools on the implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act, 1998*), with the consequence that guidance is an integral part of the school’s curriculum activities. The Education Act requires the Board of Management of a school to develop a School Plan based on the needs of the school. The School Guidance Plan forms part of the overall School Plan. (*Planning the School Guidance Programme, National Centre for Guidance in Education, 2004*).

### **1.2 Guidance in Schools**

Guidance in schools refers to a range of learning experiences, provided in a developmental sequence, that assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions consequent on these choices. These choices may be categorised into three separate but interlinked areas:

- Personal and Social Guidance
- Educational Guidance
- Career Guidance

Guidance provision in schools involves a range of guidance and counselling activities and services. The terms “guidance counselling” and “guidance and counselling” are covered

by this definition and are synonymous with the range of activities set out below .The term “guidance” is used for simplicity and encompasses that broad range of activities.

### **1.3 Guidance Activities that assist students to make choices**

- ***Counselling:*** Helping students to explore their thoughts and feelings, and the choices open to them; giving care and support to students learning to cope with the many aspects of growing up.
- ***Assessment:*** Helping students to obtain a better self-understanding through the use of psychometric tests and other inventories
- ***Information:*** Providing students with objective and factual data on education and training opportunities, occupations, entitlements etc.
- ***Advice:*** Making suggestions based on the student’s achievements and goals within the context of the educational setting
- ***Educational Development:*** Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to studying, examination performance, choices of subjects and levels. This includes Educational Development Programmes e. g. Study Skills which may be delivered by any class teacher.
- ***Personal and Social Development:*** Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to student’s personal and social development, self-awareness, decision-making and planning. This also includes Personal and Social Development Programmes in the school e. g. Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE), Civic, Social, Political Education (CSPE).These programmes are delivered by class/subject teachers.

- ***Referral:*** This includes two types of activity:

1. Referral of an individual student to the Guidance Counsellor by Principal,

Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Tutors, subject teachers, parents, Board of Management

2. Referral of an individual student by the Guidance Counsellor to other

Professionals outside of the school e. g. The National Psychological

Service (NEPS), Health Board Professionals, Youth Reach or other appropriate

Agencies.

The voluntary participation in counselling of the referred student must be respected by all concerned.

- **Consultation:** Consultation with parents, school staff and students is necessary to support the achievement of the aims of the school guidance service.
- **Feedback:** Giving feedback to school management and staff on the needs of individual students, groups, and the school as an organisation. This includes how the school guidance programme has supported students' choices and transitions.
- **Networking:** Establishing links with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance guidance work with students.
- **Promoting change:** Assisting curriculum development in the school
- **Managing, Organising and Co-ordinating** all the guidance activities into a coherent service

#### **1.4 Guidance: Whole school concern**

The nature and range of guidance activities outlined above are based on the premise that guidance is both a whole school concern and a specialist area within education. (Planning the School Guidance Programme, NCGE, 2004)

#### **1.5 Planning Process**

The Guidance and Counselling Plan will be a process (rather than a completed product). It will be a document that is *alive* and remains open to *change* and will therefore *be under permanent review*.

## **Section 2**

### **2.1 Aims of the Guidance Service**

The guidance and counselling process aims to help students to develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities; to explore possibilities and opportunities; to grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves; to make informed choices about their lives and to follow through on these choices. This is in accordance with the mission statement of Maryfield College: “we aspire to create an educational environment where pupils come to learn and to understand themselves, their abilities and their world. In this environment they learn to take responsibility for themselves and others and so can become independent adults”

### **2.2 Objectives of the Guidance Service**

The guidance and counselling process, in as far as resources allow, will balance the needs of all junior and senior cycle students in a sequential, developmental and comprehensive way. This will include students with disabilities and special educational needs, students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, students from minority ethnic groups and those at risk of early school leaving.

Guidance and Counselling will promote inclusion for all students in the school community and in doing so will acknowledge individual differences.

## **Section 3: Guidance and Counselling Staff**

Dorothy Ryan:                      Guidance Counsellor (full-time)

Professional Qualifications: Masters in Education Guidance and Counselling (TCD),

British Psychological Society: Level A and Level B  
Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing.

### **3.1 Additional personnel involved in Guidance delivery in the school:**

#### **Counselling:**

In September 2005 an additional six hours were allocated to the school by the Department of Education and Science (Circular Letter No. PPT/ 12/05) for Guidance.

Ruth Eustace was allocated four hours per week (six class periods) for counselling from September 2005:

Professional Qualification in Systemic Therapy (Systemic Psychotherapist)

Registered Family Therapist FTAI

Ann Murtagh was allocated two hours per week (three class periods) for counselling.

Professional Qualification: Masters in Chaplaincy

### SPHE:

Finola Ryan is co-ordinator of the SPHE programme and is involved in the delivery of the programme with a team of teachers. This team includes the two counsellors referred to above, as well as some R.E. personnel and other personnel who may vary from year to year

### LCVP:

The Guidance Counsellor, Dorothy Ryan, delivers part of the LCVP programme to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students.

### Work Experience Programmes:

TY Work Experience Programme is coordinated by the Guidance Counsellor, Dorothy Ryan and delivered by the Form Tutors

LCVP Work Experience Programme is delivered by the Guidance Counsellor.

## **3.2 Hours allocated to Guidance in Maryfield College**

Twenty- eight hours are allocated to Guidance by the Department of Education and Science, based on current recognised pupil enrolment (c.f. section 1.4 above).

## **3.3 Members of Guidance Planning Group:**

Principal:	Gerry Wrigley
Deputy Principal:	Patricia Mc Conville
Guidance Counsellor:	Dorothy Ryan
Counsellor/ Year Head:	Ruth Eustace
Year Head:	Ann Foley
Form Tutor:	Claire Togher
Learning Support Teacher:	Sarah Lucas

## **Section 4: Guidance Planning Process in Action**

### **Timeframe:**

The planning process will take place from 2005 -2008

### **Consultation:**

Surveys of staff, students and parents were conducted.

### **Surveys:**

### **Staff:**

A presentation was given to staff by the Guidance Counsellor in order to engage their participation in the planning process:

School staff

- were briefed on provisions of the Education Act regarding guidance
- were briefed on the current guidance services offered in the school
- were briefed on what guidance planning is about
- they were invited to make an input into guidance planning

A survey of staff was conducted (c.f. Appendix 1): September 2005

This was a qualitative survey. It was conducted in the context of looking at the needs of students—what needs are being met and what needs are not being met? There was a lot of positive feedback from the staff in relation to Guidance in the school. Agreement was reached to form a Guidance Planning Group. Those willing to participate put their names forward and subsequently a sample of willing staff members were invited by the Guidance Counsellor to a meeting to formally begin the process of guidance planning (c.f. section 2.6)

The feedback from the staff meeting was collated and decisions were made on areas to prioritise.

Certain key areas were identified by staff.

- Homework policy
- Study skills policy
- Subject choice policy

- Review and update anti-bullying policy
- Critical Incident policy
- Bereavement policy
- Time made available for form tutors to have more contact with their class

The planning group brought the last issue above to the attention of school management and there is now a regular time-tabled meeting between form tutors and their class. It should be noted that form tutors meet their classes twice a day, morning and after lunch, for roll call, at which time they deal with a range of issues.

The homework, study skills, subject choice, anti-bullying and critical incident policies have been worked on by the planning group. They have been approved by the staff.

The homework and anti-bullying policies have gone through the full consultative process: staff, students, parents, Board of Management and have been approved by all partners. The homework policy is now printed annually in the students' school journals.

The study skills, subject choice and critical incident policies have been approved by the staff. They are currently in the process of being presented to students, parents and Board of Management.

The bereavement policy has been drafted by the planning group and it has been decided to redraft it before presenting it to the staff at the next staff meeting in November 2007.

### **Students:**

A survey of students was carried out from January to April 2006. This was a qualitative survey to ascertain what students thought was working and not working in relation to Guidance and Counselling in the school. All classes were given a class period to fill in a brief questionnaire.

#### **Junior cycle students:**

Feedback was very positive. Junior cycle students raised a variety of issues, from places to have lunch to school lockers to issues relating to SPHE and guidance.

Positive comments about SPHE outweighed the negative ones.

More one to one guidance in relation to subject choice was requested. This has been addressed in as far as is humanly possible given constraints of time on the Guidance Counsellor. At present the Guidance Counsellor and subject teachers speak to year groups about subject choice and the Guidance Counsellor sees students on a one to one on request. She also sees parents on request as well as giving evening presentations to parents. The vast input in relation to subject choice has been documented in other sections of this plan.

One of the counsellors now visits junior classes once a term in relation to study management skills and general personal and social issues.

Senior Cycle students gave very positive feedback about the guidance service. The issue raised mostly was the request for more one to one guidance especially in relation to careers. In response to this, during the 2006-2007 academic year the Guidance Counsellor

was given two extra periods for individual work, as a form tutor delivered the work experience programme to T.Y's. For the present academic year 2007-2008 this has been increased by one extra period. The Guidance curriculum continues to be devised and written and the overall Guidance programme for TY coordinated by the Guidance Counsellor

**Parents:**

A survey of parents was undertaken in April to May 2006.

This was a qualitative survey asking parents what they thought was working and not working in relation to guidance in Maryfield.

The response was again very positive. A lot of positive comments about individual guidance and also requests for more time available for meetings individually with students and parents. Some parents did not seem to be aware of all that is involved in guidance. This continues to be addressed in terms of information evenings, information on the school web site and the school newsletter. Currently an information leaflet to be distributed at P/T meetings is being worked on.

## **Section 5 Guidance and Counselling Curriculum**

### **5.1 First Year Students**

#### Aims:

- To promote a smooth transition for students from primary education to second-level education
- To ensure relevant and appropriate subject choices
- To facilitate the personal and social development of students
- To develop good study skills appropriate to second-level programmes

#### The curriculum in action:

The Guidance Counsellor, Counsellors, Year Head, Form Tutors, Subject Teachers and Learning Support Teacher together with the Principal and Deputy Principal work in partnership to ensure that the needs of first year students are being met.

Activities include:

Visits to Primary Schools prior to entry.

Presentation to parents and students to address various transition issues as well as subject choice.

Liaison with Learning Support Teacher

Conducting assessment tests

Follow up on assessment tests

Induction programme on entry to school

Pastoral Care structure –Year Head/ Form Tutors liaise with Guidance

Prefect monitoring of first years

SPHE Programme

Intermittent class contact by Guidance personnel

One to one guidance available on request or by referral

### **5.2 Second Year Students**

#### Aims:

- To advance the personal and social development of students
- To facilitate the improvement of study skills
- To ease the transition from first to second year

#### The curriculum in action

Personnel involved in Guidance/ Pastoral Care work in partnership to ensure the needs of students are being met

Activities include:

Intermittent visits by Guidance personnel to classes

SPHE Programme

Pastoral Care structure in action

Liaison with Learning Support Teacher

Prefect monitoring of students

One to one guidance available by request or by referral

### **5.3 Third Year Students**

Aims:

- To enhance personal and social development of students
- To promote good study skills
- To facilitate appropriate and relevant choices for Senior Cycle

The curriculum in action

The Guidance/Pastoral Care personnel work in partnership to ensure needs of students are being met.

Activities include:

Study skills seminar

SPHE Programme

Pastoral Care structure in action

Prefect monitoring of students

Presentation to parents and students re Senior Cycle options/subject choices

One to one guidance available on request or by referral

### **5.4: Guidance Curriculum: Transition Year Career Classes**

Aims

- To develop skills involved in self-directed learning
- To acquire skills for job-search through work experience planning
- To obtain meaningful career related work experience placements
- To introduce students to career areas they may not have yet considered
- To make informed subject-choice decisions for Senior Cycle
- To learn the benefits of self-evaluation

September:

Students will:

- Identify aims and goals for Career planning during Transition Year
- Gain knowledge about decision making-- how decisions are made

- Attend Science week events--liaise with Science teachers
- Learn about the different stages of development throughout life
- Consider adolescent development : looking at the whole person:

-PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, SPIRITUAL

### October:

Students will:

- Be enabled to understand the process involved in Work experience

3 stages: Planning

Placement

Evaluation

- Begin process of planning: Organising a placement
- Develop job search skills
- Learn how and where to make contacts with employers
- Learn telephone techniques
- Develop letter writing skills
- Gain CV Preparation and completion skills
- Learn how to complete application forms
- Develop interview skills
- Learn to appreciate that presenting oneself to an employer, whether it is by paper, telephone or in person is an important skill that they will need throughout their lives

### November:

Students will:

- Outline their individual aims for work experience
- Complete a checklist prior to placement
- Finalise documentation for placement
- Learn skills involved in diary writing: day to day account of placement-- emphasis on aims, activities, learning experience, and evaluation in light of interactions with others--customers, clients, supervisors; self-development, and overall conclusions about self in relation to future career planning.
- Acquire an understanding of the importance of deadlines
- Identify ,discuss and list employer's expectations

- Do a self-evaluation of their own expectations as employees :( e. g. have they realistic expectations.....?)
- Identify aims for presentation on Science Careers
- Participate in a presentation on Careers in Science
- Evaluate Science presentation in the light of their individual aims

### December;

Students will:

- Undertake post- placement work experience evaluation
- Present their report to the class--

-What they did

- New skills learned

-Existing skills how they were enhanced

-What was learned about the world of work?

-What they learned about themselves

-How the experience has helped in career planning

-Did they interview someone in the workplace? Elaborate on findings

- Gives 3 minute presentation to class:

Methods to use: make a poster with above information

Use visuals on poster as well as script

Use colourful leaflets to show what the organisation does

Display some of the products from the organisation: e, g.

. travel brochures, toys from a crèche, photographs .....

- Appreciate that permission from relevant workplace personnel must be obtained before taking photographs and/or recording interviews

### January

Students will:

- Prepare for next work experience placement
- Learn about deadlines--importance of keeping to them
- Update letter writing, CV , application form filling skills
- Revise telephone skills
- Identify aims for presentation on Career in Engineering
- Participate in a Presentation on Engineering ( from a third level college)
- Engage in evaluation of presentation

February:

Students will:

- Prepare for Subject choice:
- Consider essential subjects for various career areas
- Appreciate the equality of all subjects
- Learn about subject requirements for entry to third level colleges
- Examine the various subject groupings as per L.C. Curriculum
- Consider the following in relation to subject choice:

-Why study a modern language?

-Why study one or more science subjects?

-Why study a practical subject?

-Why study a business subject?

-Why study an artistic subject?

-Why study history and/ or geography?

-Why study home economics?

March:

Students will:

- Evaluate what are “useful subjects”
- Consider subject likes and dislikes
- Acquire knowledge of value of subjects
- Complete interest inventories specific to each subject area c. f “Career Directions”
- Be aware of subjects my school offers:
- Outline my ideal subject selection—in an ideal world
- Consider my actual selection-- have I to compromise?
- Ensure that they have selected the important subjects for them
- Make final arrangements for second and /or third work placements--

- Ensure that they have all necessary documentation for placements
- Be facilitated to have individual/group meetings with Guidance Counsellor: (“Open door” policy)

#### April:

Students will:

- Engage in post- placement work experience evaluation
- Give individual presentation to class--see outline of details for December classes
- Appreciate correct attitudes in relation to work and study—self-assessment
- Look at Gender in the Workplace
- Consider Equal Opportunities
- Profile work skills
- Acquire knowledge about future trends in the working world
- Prepare for presentation on ICT – develop individual aims
- Participate in presentation from guest speaker on ICT
- Engage in evaluation of presentation

#### May-June:

Students will:

- Complete an assignment on work:

-Planning

-Research

-Analysis

-Presentation

-Interviewing an employee

- Consider aspirations for the future
- Learn implication of getting “fixed” on a particular area
- Be facilitated to develop new interests
- Value the benefits of setting and achieving goals
- Consider unrealistic aspirations? / Realistic judgements?
- Evaluate personal qualities v examination results
- Pick a general Career area-- complete a poster presentation
- Evaluate career planning and work experience: how they are related:

Two strands involved: 1. what they learned about themselves

2. what they learned about the world of work

- Learn that good career planning is built on the above twin pillars.
- Give these two areas serious and honest consideration.
- Participate in planned Science presentations from guest speakers on: Astronomy  
Forensics Genetics etc

TY Programme will conclude with Presentation to Parents of Career Projects in the form of visual displays in the Assembly Hall.

### **5.5: Guidance Curriculum: Fifth Year Careers Classes**

#### **AIMS**

To appreciate what is involved in making good career decisions

To learn to value individual differences

To develop the skills necessary to research career choices

To make broad-based decisions by the end of 5<sup>th</sup> year (keeping options open)

#### **September:**

Students will:

Compare and contrast differences and similarities between the terms:

Work, Job, Career

Identify reasons for Career Planning

Know the importance of Career planning

Set individual Career goals and objectives for 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Identify what is involved in making a good Careers decision

Realise that making a career decision is not a single activity but a continuous process (lifelong) of assessing and reviewing my individual abilities, aptitudes, academic progress, skills, qualities, personal characteristics, career interests, work preferences.....

Review reasons for choosing Leaving Certificate subject options --

Link their chosen subjects to career areas

Review general Career Categories

Will be introduced to the concept of Career Investigation/Project

Identify purposes of a Career Investigation

Do a template for and classify the elements of a Career Investigation

Categorise the necessary steps in building up information towards an effective Career Investigation

October:

Students will:

Set goals for CI (having reviewed the key stages)

Identify methods, resources for carrying out CI

Specify deadlines for each stage of the CI

Appreciate that sharing information is an important part of Careers class, therefore each student will give an oral presentation to the class on completion of the CI. (Each student will decide on their own method e. g use of collages/visuals/power point)

Develop a Personal Profile through identifying and recognising the many elements involved e. g skills, qualities, achievements, interests etc.....

Look at their individual personalities through self- evaluation: Do I know myself?

Review Multiple Intelligences Theory with a view to realising that each individual is intelligent in some way and that academic “intelligence” is not the only kind.

Pinpoint their individual strengths through examining MI theory

Appreciate and value all intelligences

November:

Students will:

Identify sources of information for Career Investigation

Specify more specific career interests by completing Interest Inventories:

Complete two/three of the following:

Occupational Families Quiz

Job Interest Guides Part 1 and Part 2

Career Interest Inventory

Career Directions Interest Classifications (electronically)

Qualifax Interest Test (electronically)

Evaluate Interests tests--

-correlation between the tests?

-do they pinpoint my interests accurately?

List their top five career interests

For each career interest area: identify at least five specific careers under each category

Identify one career area for research

December:

Students will:

Become familiar with the various Career Computer Software Packages

Career Directions

Qualifax

College websites: HEI's / PLC's.....

Variety of other websites e.g. Accountancy, Science, Technology, Nursing,

Defence Forces, Gardai, and Fas.....

Progress their career research through the use of the various resources, especially websites

Become familiar with the entry requirements for college courses/careers

Learn about NFQ and the relevance of the levels involved

When submitting CI ensure that the following elements are included:

A description of the career in two or three sentences--must be action word based

List the skills and qualities necessary for this particular career

Identify two separate entry pathways leading to this career e.g. College /HEI course,  
Further Education route /Apprenticeship ...

If only one pathway exists e.g. to the Gardai, then the student must outline their career  
plan while waiting to be called to the Gardai.

Research the specific and general entry requirements to each course

Give details of the course content for each pathway

Identify name of course, length of the course, name/address of relevant colleges, the  
qualifications obtained on completion

Submit completed CI by last week in first term

### January:

Students will:

Present completed CI's to their individual classes

Evaluate CI in the light of career aspirations

Prepare for Work Experience/ Work shadowing placements

Identify ways of making contact with employers

Compile personal lists of employer contacts in order to acquire work experience: name of  
companies, addresses, phone numbers, emails, name of contact person

Learn how to write an accurate, effective letter to employers seeking work experience

Acquire the skill of typing an accurate letter of job application/covering letter using the  
computer

Learn the do's and don'ts of filling up application forms accurately

Prepare a CV and become familiar with the guidelines involved

Acquire interview skills

### February

Students will:

Complete a module on enterprise/enterprising people /voluntary organisations in order to  
acquire an appreciation of entrepreneurship

Learn to appreciate the attributes and skills required to be a successful entrepreneur

Understand the differences between enterprise and voluntary organisations

Identify careers in voluntary organisations

List sources of work locally and nationally

Examine local, national and international voluntary organisations

Identify an organisation that may be willing to give a presentation to the class

Prepare for the visit of the speaker from voluntary organisation or company

Research the background of the organisation

Identify individual and group aims for this visit

Work as a team in organising the visit-- each student allotted tasks before, during and  
after the event--

Phone calls, letters, prepare questions to ask, prepare room, organise

audio visual equipment, seating, refreshments for speaker, decide who will meet and greet and thank speaker....  
Evaluate the visit in the light of individual and group aims

### March

Students will:

Choose another specific career area to research  
Employ the template utilised previously  
Carry out research with a view to presenting to class by early May

Identify individual aims for work experience  
Review progress for completing arrangements for acquiring work experience  
Recognise the importance of writing a day to day diary while on work experience

Prepare for Fas Opportunities Careers Exhibition  
Identify individual aims for attending exhibition  
Recognise importance of using visit to exhibition to further career research  
Attend Fas exhibition  
Evaluate visit to Fas exhibition

Appreciate the value of using visits to college open days to enhance their career research  
Prepare plan/review guidelines for out of class learning experience  
Plan visit to a third level college e.g. UCD  
Outline individual aims for visit to open day  
Be familiar with content of worksheet which they will be required to complete after college visit  
Participate in visit  
Evaluate visit to college in the light of individual aims

Undertake Aptitude tests (these will be administered to the year group as a whole in fifth year, as they are normed for age 16+)

### April:

Students will:

Complete preparation for work experience placements --this is mandatory for LCVP students, but non -LCVP students are encouraged to undertake work experience/shadowing during school holidays, as it is an invaluable way of discovering work/career preferences  
On return from work experience placements: Evaluation of work experience  
Group feedback of work experience  
Write report/submit completed diary of work experience

Report progress of Career Investigation being currently undertaken

Review what was learned from first CI  
Be assisted with career research by information given on a weekly basis about college courses, changes in requirements etc

May- June:

Students will:

Submit completed CI's

Give individual class presentations

Evaluate CI

Review study skills

Set aims for study/revision for next few weeks prior to summer tests

Become aware of opportunities in a diverse number of career areas

Be encouraged to consider careers in the areas of Science, Technology and Engineering through research, visits to specific careers events in these areas and visiting speakers

Outline personal aims for sixth year in relation to study and career research

**5.6: Guidance Curriculum: Sixth Year Careers Classes**

**Aims**

- To evaluate aptitudes in the context of making good career decisions
- To update and improve on career research skills acquired in 5<sup>th</sup> year
- To develop an understanding of the broad range of choices available after L.C
- To acquire skills involved in making applications to H.E.I's , /F.Ed.C. /Jobs...

September:

Students will:

- Review Interest tests and Aptitude tests results (administered in 5<sup>th</sup> year)
- Evaluate school/subject progress: 5<sup>th</sup> year Summer Tests?
- Demonstrate knowledge of range of intelligences: MI Theory reviewed
- Identify: strengths, skills, qualities
- Review "Making a good Career Decision" : Factors involved
- Recognise the necessity for on-going research

- Prepare for Higher Options Careers Conference:

Complete a group plan

Identify individual aims

Make an individual plan

Plan for visits to stands

Plan for selection of career talks

Complete personal time plan for event

- Engage in class evaluation of visit to Higher Options Careers' Conference

October:

Students will:

- Learn about UCAS application procedure
- Develop skills to use UCAS Apply-- on line application system
- Learn importance of Personal Statement for those not applying can be used for CV and job application forms
- Identify importance of references from the school
- Learn how to research courses and colleges in the UCAS system
- Acquire decision-making skills
- Consider reasons why they might apply to colleges through UCAS system
- Become familiar with the CAO system
- Identify rules for application through CAO
- Develop knowledge of HEI'S range of courses
- Revise knowledge of colleges and courses acquired in 5<sup>th</sup> year
- Gain knowledge of differences between Independent (private) colleges and non-fee paying colleges
- Acquire knowledge of advantages of computer application to CAO versus paper application
- Learn about "restricted application" courses
- Know what making a late CAO application involves
- Develop aims, prepare questions for visiting speaker
- Engage with speaker and evaluate visit for homework ...
- Be aware of rules applying to correction of errors/omissions
- Where applicable become informed about non EU applications to HEI's
- Demonstrate that they are familiar with the "golden rule" ORDER OF MERIT:
- Learn what is meant by random numbers/ random selection

- Acquire the knowledge to realise the responsibilities of the applicant when making applications
- Inform themselves about on-going changes/ information on college updates/new courses etc.....
- Attend some selected Open Days with the permission of school and parent(s)
- Prepare adequately for Open Days before the event—class/homework
- Submit drafts of Personal Statements/homework
- Fill up UCAS application on line and “send” to G.C.'s computer
- Inform themselves re UCAS deadlines
- Prepare for visit of guest speaker to class—aims/homework
- Listen to and participate in presentation from guest speaker
- Engage in evaluation of presentation –homework assignment

### November:

Students will:

- Identify aims/ prepare questions for a college presentation from NUIM
- Participate in college presentation
- Evaluate presentation :homework
- Revise N F Q's-- levels: look at where they might realistically fit in right now
- Learn how to submit a CAO application
- Practice for paper application
- Practice for computer/online application
- Learn the importance of keeping photocopy or print out of application
- Acquire knowledge about what happens after submitting application
- Learn about the statement of course choices from CAO
- Learn importance of dealing with communications from CAO immediately
- Acquire knowledge of rules for acceptance /non-acceptance: to be revised in May

### October to November:

Some students will not be interested or have the entry requirements to apply through the CAO system at this stage in their educational development therefore these students will:

- Improve decision-making skills
- Be encouraged to value their “non-academic” abilities, talents, skills...
- Learn about themselves by doing more interest inventories
- Be facilitated to carry out more intensive career research

All students will gain knowledge of:

- PLC courses
- Fas courses
- Other apprenticeships--Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy, ESB etc
- Army, Air Corps, Navy
- Gardai
- Civil Service
- and other opportunities in the jobs market and career areas

November to December:

Students will:

- Identify aims for visits from colleges/ career talks
- Engage in presentations from visiting speakers e.g.

-TCD: general talk

-DCU: language courses

-DCU general talk

-DIT Science talk-- encouraging students to choose a science career

-DIT Business and general talk

-and any other colleges available for visits

December:

Students will:

- Continue Computer room research on CAO, non CAO, PLC and other areas
- Be reminded of importance of deadlines
- Consider Medical / Para-medical courses

- Demonstrate knowledge of Nursing as a career-- speaker / class work sheets
- Engage in preparation for College of Surgeons Open Day: applies to some students ( held during Christmas holidays)

### January:

Students will:

- Use facilities of Computer room to intensify career research
- Prepare for speakers from Further Education Colleges

E.g. Whitehall College of Further Education

Colaiste Dhulaigh

Marino College

Killester College

Whitehall College

- Prepare for “Mocks”: study skills, revision techniques, relaxation exercises

### February:

Students will:

- Evaluate examination performance as demonstrated in “mocks”
- What subjects require more attention/study techniques...?
- Review subject levels
- Estimate points based on present performance
- Review career choices
- Pursue further career research
- Practice interview skills
- Prepare for PLC interviews
- Become informed about Access programmes where applicable
- Identify their eligibility for sports or other scholarships.

### April

Students will:

- Research general areas e.g. what can you do with an Arts Degree?
- Look again at Science careers: variety of qualifications/ options

- Consider: Why study Science? Engineering? IT?
- Research/review careers (PLC group) in Child Care, Social Care etc

### April to June

Students will:

- Review choices :another look at CAO choices--computer room
- Prepare for “change of mind”:
- Gain knowledge of procedures involved in “change of mind”
- Demonstrate good study /revision skills
- Engage in stress management/ relaxation exercises: boosting self-esteem
- Identify “What do graduates do?”
- Acquire knowledge of the Grants' system: procedures/ eligibility
- Learn about surviving in College
- Become aware of structures/facilities in college/further education institutions
- Be aware of availability of G.C. in August and September : returning to school for guidance
- Develop their own ability to remember deadlines
- Demonstrate knowledge of rules governing acceptance of CAO offers
- Compile a list of dates relevant to Leaving Certificate / CAO acceptance/PLC's etc
- Identify and develop their feelings of self-worth and value as human beings
- Acquire positive coping strategies in the context of exam performance/stress/feelings of pressure(real or imagined) to do well and “get the points”

## **Section 6: Meetings with Students**

**6.1** Meetings with students on a one to one tend to fall into three categories:

- Those of a purely guidance nature e.g. career guidance, study skills
- Those that initially present as guidance but develop into counselling
- Those of a purely counselling nature

### **6.2 Confidentiality**

The general principle and cornerstone of the counselling relationship is based on confidentiality which includes confidentiality relating to information disclosed and case records. However there is no law of confidentiality which would command silence when the welfare of the child is concerned. (Child Care Act, 1991)

#### **Confidentiality statement made to students:**

On first meeting with a student one to one, the condition attached to confidentiality is made clear by making the following statement to the student:

Meeting with me is an opportunity for you to explore/ talk about whatever matters you have on your mind. Our discussions may help you to be clearer about yourself and the choices open to you. I want to assure you that your welfare is paramount, so that what you tell me will generally be confidential. However, if you tell me anything that indicates that you are in danger or someone else is in danger, I cannot keep this confidential and will have to pass it on to someone who can take steps to deal with it. I will tell you beforehand if it is necessary to do this and to whom I will be giving the information. I assure you that this will be done in the most sensitive way possible. Only certain people, e. g. your parents/ the school Principal may need to know. So, would you like to ask me any questions about what I have said?

Permission will be sought from parents to refer the student to the Guidance Counsellor. If a counselling issue arises during a careers meeting with the Guidance Counsellor , then the Guidance Counsellor will if the need arises, seek parental permission for counselling.

#### **6.3 Crisis situations :**

In schools students may sometimes present with crises that demand immediate attention. In such circumstances the emotional state of the student may be such as to make

inappropriate, at that time, a formal statement on the parameters of guidance and counselling. The **duty of care** to the student may require initiating actions designed to protect the health and welfare of the student or others

#### **6.4 Student appointments: Protocols/Procedures:**

The following procedures apply to issuing of appointments: The Guidance Counsellor gives an appointment to an individual student by issuing a signed appointment slip to the student, detailing the day, date and time of the appointment. The student must show this appointment slip to the subject/class teacher and at the beginning of the allotted class time. In order to give permission for the student to be released from class the teacher signs the permission slip. On conclusion of the appointment the Guidance Counsellor writes the time on the appointment slip. If applicable the student shows this to the subject teacher on return to class.

Notice of an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor may be given in any of the following ways:

- to the student by the Guidance Counsellor if she presents at the Guidance and Counselling office seeking an appointment
- to the student by the Guidance Counsellor at the end of a one to one session
- to the student by the Guidance Counsellor during class contact
- when an appointment slip has been placed by the Guidance Counsellor in the relevant roll book, the form tutor gives the appointment slip to the student.

Note: an “open door” policy exists whereby a student may present themselves at the Guidance Counsellor’s office at any time.

#### **6.5 Procedure for referrals:**

Referrals to the Guidance Counsellor may be made by the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Tutors, Learning Support Teacher, subject teachers and any other staff member.

Parents may refer their daughter directly to the Guidance Counsellor or indirectly through a staff member.

Referrals may arise from any of the three broad areas of guidance: educational, career or personal and social. Some examples are: subject choice, changing a subject-career implications, discontinuing a subject-career implications, changing level in a subject-career implications, study skills, decisions related to Senior Cycle choices, general/specific career guidance, personal counselling related to a wide range of issues that directly or indirectly affect the student’s progress in the educational system.

## **6.6 Prioritising student appointments:**

Crisis situations will always be given priority ( see paragraph 6.3 )

Given the time restraints in dealing with six year groups it is necessary to prioritise who may be seen for appointments. Throughout the year sixth year career appointments are given priority. The aim is to see every sixth year at least once by the end of the first term. Further appointments with sixth years are arranged according to need, request or referral throughout the remainder of the year. These appointments afford the student, on a one to one basis, the opportunity to explore their career options and choices for further study or work. Guidance with sixth years, in relation to the various application procedures, will vary depending on the time of year, for example: UCAS, CAO, PLC. FAS, Art Colleges, Private Colleges, Agricultural/Equestrian Colleges, Defence Forces, Gardai, Civil Service, Hairdressing and other direct entry careers, Access Programmes, Academic Scholarships, Sports Scholarships, Grant/ Financial assistance.....

Examples of other issues which arise with sixth years are: motivation, goal setting, study skills, subject levels, discontinuing a subject, interview skills, references, personal and social issues.

All other year groups are given appointments on request from the student, or by referral from staff or parents throughout the year in relation to the three broad areas of guidance. Priority is given to “urgent” cases.

Fifth years are given appointments on request or by referral. It is not possible to give every fifth year a career appointment, although ideally this would be of great benefit to them.

Group interviews are conducted with the fifth year LCVP classes subsequent to their work experience placements by the Guidance Counsellor and the LCVP Co-ordinator.

Fourth Years (TY) are given individual appointments on student request or staff/parent referral. It is not possible to give every fourth year an individual career appointment. Every effort is made to see fourth years in second term, individually or in small groups, prior to subject choice for Leaving Certificate.

Third Years are given individual appointments on request or by staff/parent referral. An individual career appointment for every third is not possible. However, prior to senior cycle/subject choices in second term, every effort is made to accommodate individual or small group interviews with third years. Students/parents/staff must request these appointments. No one is turned away and will be seen if necessary at lunch time.

Counsellors who engage in personal and social counselling make individual arrangements to see students for counselling.

**6.7 Group protocols/procedures:** Arrangements for group guidance and counselling is made with individual class teachers. According as the need arises a suitable time and venue will be arranged with the subject teacher. A small group may be withdrawn from a class for special group work with the Guidance Counsellor or Counsellors.

## **Section 7: Counselling**

Personal counselling facilitates students by suggesting and exploring a range of coping strategies and interventions in a caring and sensitive way appropriate to the individual's needs. Counselling can only take place in an atmosphere where the young person feels secure, accepted and understood, and where confidentiality is guaranteed. (c f section 6.2 on confidentiality). Counselling is an essential and integral part of the school's educational provision. Counselling facilitates the individual student in a holistic way to realistically appraise their abilities, interests and aptitudes in order to make appropriate life choices and achieve personal happiness and fulfillment in society.

**7.1** The Guidance Counsellor /Counsellors may be involved in:

### **Individual counselling:**

“Counselling is an interaction process which facilitates meaningful understanding of the self and environment and / or clarification of goals and values for future behaviour” (Shertzer & Stone,1974)

### **Group counselling:**

“This is a very broad term covering all types of counselling for more than two people. There are many different ways of running groups, but the idea with most of them is that members listen to, support and challenge each of the members, who thus learn to be assertive and to experience how other people see them”( Bayne, Horton, Berry and Noyes, 1994)

### **Peer counselling:**

“Peer counselling is defined as a variety of interpersonal helping behaviours assumed by non-professionals (I. e. students/clients etc) who undertake a helping role with others (I.e. Guidance Counsellor). Peer counselling includes one to one helping relationships, group leadership, discussion leadership, advisement, tutoring and all activities of an interpersonal human helping or assisting nature.”( Tindall, 1989)

### **Multicultural Counselling**

Ireland is becoming a multicultural society. Children from different cultural backgrounds attend Maryfield. The Guidance service aims: to support, encourage and guide these

students; to avoid stereotyping; to as far as possible research the client's background; to find counselling methods to suit the client's needs; to try to understand the culture and the sometimes very difficult history that informs the presence of minority groups in Ireland; to strive to develop empathy with the expectations of these groups. .

## **7.2 Referrals**

Where the young person's problem is such that the Guidance Counsellor judges her own expertise to be such that she is no longer unlikely to be able to provide the student with the structure, and protection usually associated with the amelioration of, or recovery from, a particular condition, then the Guidance Counsellor will refer the student to a more specialised service, where such is available, and will monitor progress of such a referral.

When the student and /or their parents accept referral the Guidance Counsellor continues to exercise their *duty of care* to the student until contact is established between the client and the other practitioner. Where the client refuses referral, the implications of such refusal will be pointed out to her i e that the professional relationship with the current practitioner is being ended, and that the parents/guardians will be informed of such.

Consultation with colleagues:

It is sometimes necessary to engage in consultation with colleagues in order to find the correct approach or alternative approaches to dealing with the student. In this case confidentiality is paramount and the guidelines for confidentiality already outlined apply.

## **7.3 Counselling approaches used**

Cognitive Behavioural approach (CBT):

This focuses on thinking patterns and behaviours. It is based on the assumption that a person learns to think and act in a certain way as a result of their experiences and their perceptions of those experiences.

Behavioural-systems approach incorporating Egan's systemic approach:

This is a meta-model of counselling, is "content free" and can therefore be integrated with other theoretical approaches.

Goal-attainment approach:

This model , in which goals are negotiated at the outset, can be incorporated into any theory of counselling . It is employed in such a way that its helpfulness ness can be

evaluated. Person-centred therapy, rational-emotive therapy, Gestalt and behaviour therapy may be employed with this model.

Integrative/ Eclectic approach:

This is the counselling process in which concepts and methods from a variety of systems are employed. Techniques and rationales based on more than one orientation are used to meet the needs of the individual case.

Reality Therapy approach:

This approach assists clients to explore their wants, perceptions and level of commitment, while discussing aspects of behaviour and assisting clients to evaluate their behaviour and wants and thereby encourage them to make specific attainable plans.

Existential/Phenomenological approach:

The emphasis of this approach is on gaining insight and self-awareness through understanding the person in the moment. Existential theory provides a theoretical basis from which to address basic concerns of ontological insecurities, existential anxieties and fear of ultimate meaninglessness. Depending on the case, this approach may be integrated with other approaches.

## **Section 8 : Consultation with Parents**

Parents are welcome to visit the Guidance Counsellor to afford them the opportunity to discuss their daughter's aptitudes, abilities and interests, in educational and occupational planning .as well as issues of personal concern if so desired. The aim of the school guidance service is to support parents in their endeavours to help their daughters with their personal and social development and school progress.

### **8.1 Protocols/procedures for meetings with parents:**

1. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with parents at the regular parent/ teacher meetings for all year groups. Parents are seen on a first come basis. If parents are unable to see the Guidance Counsellor during these meetings, they are invited to make an appointment for another time.
2. Parents are welcome to ring the school at any time to make an appointment to meet with the Guidance Counsellor. A request for a meeting will be acknowledged and will be arranged for the soonest available time.
3. In certain circumstances the Guidance Counsellor may need to contact the parent (s) in order to request a meeting with them. Contact is made with the parent directly by phone to arrange a mutually convenient time for the meeting. If appropriate, the parents (s) are informed over the phone of the reason for the meeting.

### **8.2 Annual presentations made to parents:**

#### **Parents of incoming first year students**

Part of the induction programme for first years will involve a presentation to parents on subject choice as well as an introduction to the services of the Guidance and Counselling

Department. Parents are welcome to visit the school and by appointment may consult with the Guidance Counsellor before their daughter comes to the school.

#### Parents of third year students:

A presentation on senior cycle choices/ subject choice is made annually by the Guidance Counsellor to parents' of third years. On the same evening presentations are made by the Year Head, the Transition Year Co-ordinator, and the LCVP Co-ordinator. Third year students are present at this meeting Parents are encouraged to ask questions at the end of the presentation and /or to consult with the staff after the meeting.

#### Parents of Transition Year students

In September parents of TY students are given presentations by the TY Year Head, TY Co-ordinator and the Guidance Counsellor, This forms part of the induction programme for TY. The programme for the year is outlined and parents are encouraged to get involved and be pro-active in monitoring their daughter's progress during Transition Year.

#### Parents of sixth year students:

Presentation given to parents to inform them of choices their daughters have after the Leaving Certificate – CAO, UCAS, Further Education Colleges (PLC's), Apprenticeships etc.

#### Contact with the Parents' Association

Presently this takes place through the Principal as issues related to guidance and counselling may arise.

## **Section 9: Test Administration and Interpretation**

Psychological and educational standardised measurement instruments provide information helpful in predicting academic and occupational performance, assessing remediation requirements and levels of achievement.

The Guidance Counsellor is the trained administrator and interpreter of psychological and other standardised educational tests. The Guidance Counsellor is therefore responsible for the maintenance of professional standards in the administration, interpretation and dissemination of tests and their results.

### **9.1 The remit of the Guidance Counsellor in relation to testing is as follows:**

1. Performance tests and school reports: In order to engage in effective guidance and counselling of students the Guidance Counsellor has access to school reports and results of performance tests.
2. Individual and group tests of general ability: These are standardised tests and are administered to incoming first year students by the Guidance Counsellor. Testing usually takes place on the first Saturday in February, in the year of entry to the school
3. General group reading test: administered to incoming first years on the same day as the general ability tests.
4. Aptitude tests: Administered by the Guidance Counsellor to fifth year students. Best practice is ensured by administering DAT's to students age 16 + as these tests are normed for age 16+
5. Interest inventories: These are conducted on a group basis, usually during careers classes with fourth and fifth years. It may be necessary to conduct interest inventories on a one to one with some students.
6. Problem Checklist and Counselling Inventories: These are always conducted on an individual basis.
7. Individual interpretation and application: This is carried out during a one to one interview with students.

## **9.2 Confidentiality in testing**

Results of standardised tests will be given to students in a confidential manner. A one to one feedback discussion is approached in such a way as to ensure in as far as possible that it is a thoroughly rewarding experience for the student. A test result will not be taken in isolation but will be viewed in context of the development of the whole individual. Feedback will be oriented towards the immediate objective of the testing e.g. what have the test results highlighted for discussion that can help the student plan their career/choose their academic route?

Confidentiality in storage and access to test materials are of the utmost importance. The following procedures are adhered to in this regard:

1. Test materials are stored securely
2. Access to test materials is controlled
3. Respect for copyright law and agreements to any prohibitions on the copying or transmission of materials in electronic or other forms to other people, whether qualified or otherwise
4. Protection of the integrity of the test by not coaching individuals on actual test materials or other practice materials that might unfairly influence their test performance.

## **9.3 Access to test results and data held :**

Access is restricted to those with a need to know. Persons that are untrained will not be allowed access to raw data from tests but only to clearly described interpretations. Individuals do change and develop and therefore psychometric data can become less accurate over time. Tests can provide well-constructed measures of aspects of individuals at a point in time, but this does not preclude a degree of subsequent change and development.

Procedures adhered to (in accordance with best practice guidelines : British Psychological Society) are as follows:

1. Appropriate parties who may legitimately receive test results as well as the Guidance Counsellor are: the Principal, the Deputy Principal, the Year Head, the Learning Support Teacher. Oral reports will be given to these parties and when necessary and if requested written reports will be supplied also.
2. Form Tutors and subject teachers may, when appropriate, be given general oral qualitative descriptions but will not have access to actual test data results or to written reports of data.
3. Levels of confidentiality are explained to individuals and groups before tests are administered.
4. Data kept on file is protected so that only those who have a right of access can obtain them.
5. Test data will not be kept on file longer than two years after the student has completed her education in the school.
6. Test results will be treated confidentially at all times and consent will be obtained before releasing results to others

## **Section 10: Links: Guidance and Counselling as part of the whole school provision**

The following demonstrates the whole school dimension of guidance.

### The Board of Management and School Management Team.

The Guidance Counsellor co-operates with the Board of Management and the Principal and Deputy Principal to ensure that the guidance provision and practice in the school is of the highest possible standard. A Guidance Planning Group has been set up. Regular meetings of this group are held in order to ensure ongoing guidance planning. Details of meetings are dealt with in Section

### **Pastoral Links and Cross-Curricular Links**

#### Links with Year Heads

The Guidance Counsellor is time -tabled to attend Year Head meetings every week. Meetings also take place on a regular basis with individual Year Heads dealing with a wide range of issues that affect students in the three areas of guidance. Year Heads frequently refer students to the Guidance Counsellor and meetings occur regularly about a particular student or students. These meetings are formally through the Year Head meetings and the Care Team and through informal meetings at break time and other opportunities throughout the day

#### Links with Form Tutors

The form tutor carries out a pastoral role and as such links with the Guidance Counsellor in relation to a wide range of issues concerning students. These issues will interlink between personal and social , educational and career. The form tutor may refer a student for guidance and counselling in any of these areas. Many meetings take place throughout the school year between the form tutor and the guidance counsellor. Meetings are often on an informal basis at break time or lunch time. A formal forum is through the Guidance Planning Group and the Care Team

#### Links with the Learning Support Teacher

In the context of the School Mission Statement and in the spirit of educational inclusion for all students, ongoing contact is maintained and fostered on a pro -active basis between the Learning Support Teacher and the Guidance Counsellor. This involves ongoing meetings which are detailed in the section on special needs in this document. The Learning Support Teacher may refer individual students for guidance.

### Links with Transition Year Coordinator

The Transition Year Coordinator and the Guidance Counsellor liaise continuously throughout the year. Regular meetings take place twice a term. Areas for planning, discussion and decision making include: Evening information meeting for parents (usually held in September) Transition Year work experience (e.g. setting dates, placements and evaluations), coordinating re communications to parents, arranging career talks and visits to colleges for TY students. Other issues that may arise from time to time (e.g. contact with the Parents' Council) are also the subject for discussion at these meetings. The TY Coordinator may also refer students for guidance.

### Links with the LCVP Coordinator

Liaison between the Guidance Counsellor and the LCVP Coordinator is on-going. Meetings take place on a regular basis at least twice a term and sometimes more frequently. Planning and decision making occurs in relation to LCVP work experience, career investigations, guest speakers, out of class learning experiences such as visits out to industrial settings, arrangements for LCVP recorded interviews as well as planning in relation to LCVP curriculum and class content. The Guidance Counsellor delivers part of the LCVP programme through class contact with students. This includes the LCVP Career Investigations, preparing students for the work experience placements, for visiting speakers, for the recorded video interviews and conducting the interviewing for the video interviews. There are strong cross-curricular links between LCVP and Guidance.

### Links with SPHE Coordinator

Meetings are held with the SPHE coordinator twice a year on a formal basis in relation to the SPHE curriculum. From time to time, as the need arises, meetings may take place with the coordinator or individual SPHE teachers. This is usually in relation to the need for individual guidance for students which may have arisen as a result of a class discussion on a topic.

### Links with Subject Teachers

The Guidance Counsellor establishes and maintains contact with subject teachers throughout the academic year. Subject teachers are informed of events and programmes that have come to the attention of guidance e.g. Maths and Science and IT events in HEI's; opportunities for work experience in Maths, Science and IT; Language presentations, Tourism programmes linking with Home Economics, Art and Music events. The guidance curriculum includes visiting speakers for all of the above mentioned subjects. There are also strong links between LCVP and the various subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Home Economics, Art, Business, Accounting and Music.

### **Links with Outside Agencies**

### Links with National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS)

The Guidance Counsellor has on-going liaison with the Department of Education and Science Psychologist. Meetings occur about twice a year when the Psychologist visits the school. Contact is maintained throughout the year by phone. This link provides an advisory and support structure to the Guidance Counsellor.

#### Links with Counselling Services in the Community

The Guidance Counsellor has links with a variety of counselling agencies and organisations, both private and public as well as with psychologists who are private practitioners. When necessary a student may be referred to one of these services. This necessitates formal transfer of a case to the outside agency (refer to section on referrals/counselling for details).

On transfer of a case to another practitioner the Guidance Counsellor will not engage in formal counselling with the student. It may be necessary to maintain on going liaison between the outside practitioner and the Guidance Counsellor in order to ensure the welfare of the student within the school structure. This liaison will occur and continue as long as is deemed necessary and will always be dependent on parental permission.

#### Links with Psychiatric Services//Medical Practitioners/Social Workers

Students may sometimes be referred through their parents to a Medical Practitioner or to Psychiatric services. Consequent on permission of parents and student and in the interests of the student's welfare, these practitioners (e.g. G.P's, nurses, counsellors, teachers...) may engage in ongoing liaison with the Guidance Counsellor. Liaison with Social Workers may take place under the same conditions. (Refer to section on student in crisis).

#### Links with Access Officers and Disability Officers in Third Level / PLC Colleges

Contact with Access Officers/ Disability Officers in colleges usually takes place when students are in sixth year. Arrangements are made for students to fill the necessary application forms and if necessary information meetings are arranged between the Officer and a student or group of students.

#### Links with Admissions Officers of Third Level and Further Education Colleges

Contact is maintained throughout the school year with Third Level and PLC Colleges. The Guidance Counsellor attends meetings with Admissions Officers from a vast number of colleges on a regular basis. These meetings facilitate up to date information on careers and courses as well as planning for future student needs before and after entry to college.

CAO hosts and facilitates a yearly meeting between Third Level Colleges Admission Officers and Guidance Counsellors. During College Open days meetings are held between the Admission Officers and Guidance Counsellors. Individual PLC Colleges arrange meetings with Guidance Counsellors. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors arrange meetings between the colleges and Guidance Counsellors at the Higher Options

Conference usually held in September and at the Annual General Conference of Guidance Counsellors held yearly... Attendance at these meetings is very important for the Guidance Counsellor as they provide up to date information on careers, courses, entry requirements etc. as well as facilitating planning for present and future student needs. However attendance is dependant on time and resources available

#### Links with School Liaison Officers of Third Level/Further Education Colleges

The Guidance Counsellor maintains contact with College School Liaison Officers either through meetings at College Open Days, phone contact or through arranged visits of the Liaison Officer to the school. These links enable up to date careers / course information to be obtained and the needs of students evaluated.

#### Links with Guidance Counsellors from Third Level and Further Education Colleges

Transition to Third Level and Further Education can be a difficult time for students. Establishing and maintaining contact with Guidance Counsellors from these Colleges is especially valuable if a student requires special support and consideration in relation to counselling issues. This support enables ease of transition for the student from second to third level. Confidentiality guidelines are always adhered to in these cases.

#### Links with Employers/Industry

In planning and organising the work experience programmes for Transition Year and LCVP the Guidance Counsellor maintains strong links with employers and industry. Through the planning , placement and evaluation stages of the work experience programmes there is ongoing contact with employers. (Refer to section on work experience for details) Links with industry are also maintained through industrial visits for LCVP students and special industrial placements for TY students e.g. IBM programme for schools. .The Careers programme in the school incorporates the Science Technology Education Programme for Schools (STEPS) run by the Institute of Engineers of Ireland. Through this affiliation strong links are forged with employers and industry.

#### Links with FAS

Fas, the National Training and Employment Authority, offers an alternative route to a career for second level students. Maintaining contact with this Agency is of the utmost importance. Through individual guidance and class based guidance students are informed about the services of Fas. Links are maintained through organising visits to Fas Centres and exhibitions e.g. Fas Opportunities Annual Conference, and by arrangements with speakers from the local Fas Centres to give career talks to students in school. Contact is also maintained through attendance at seminars /workshops/ information sessions arranged by Fas for Guidance Counsellors.

#### Links with Failte Ireland

Tourism is one of the most important industries in Ireland. There are numerous alternative career paths available in this area and therefore forging strong links between the Guidance Department and Failte Ireland is of the utmost importance for students. Speakers from Failte Ireland are invited to give presentations to students and visits for students are arranged to the annual "Tourism Roadshow". Work experience placements are arranged in the Tourism sector e.g. hotels, restaurants, leisure centres. Contact is maintained also through attendance at seminars arranged by Failte Ireland for Guidance Counsellors. Cross-curricular links are forged between the Guidance Counsellor and Home Economics co-ordinator in relation to Failte Ireland's Tourism Awareness Programme

### Links with CAO

Maintaining links with the Central Applications Office is essential as this is the central agency through which applications to most third level colleges are made. CAO arranges annual seminars for Guidance Counsellors to inform them of up to date information in relation to colleges and courses. Attendance is essential in order to be well informed and aware of new developments and thereby carry out a productive role in guiding students.

### Links with FETAC

FETAC- Further Education and Training Awards Council: This is the national awarding body for further education and training in Ireland. FETAC awards are available through a variety of national course provider organisations e.g. VEC's, FAS, BIM, Teagasc, Failte Ireland. FETAC provision and awards are subject to constant change and therefore it is essential for the Guidance Counsellor to maintain contact with this national body.

### Links with HETAC

HETAC- Higher Education Training Awards Council: This is the national body for higher education and training in Ireland. HETAC awards qualifications at all levels of higher education and training up to PhD level. The Guidance Counsellor has ongoing contact with a wide range of these course providers. In addition, attendance at seminars and workshops provided by HETAC ensures the continuing professional development of the Guidance Counsellor for the benefit of the students in her care.

### Links with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

This body, known as NQAI, was set up in 2001 to develop the National Framework of Qualifications, which was launched in 2003. The National Framework of Qualifications comprises three central elements---levels, award types and named awards. It is essentially a structure of ten levels. Standards of knowledge, skill and competence have been set out in generic ranges for each level. This is a new approach to the meaning of an award. An award will recognise learning outcomes - what a person with an award can do and understand, rather than time spent on a programme. This National Framework of

Qualifications is undergoing constant change therefore it is vital for the Guidance Counsellor to maintain constant links with the NQAI.

#### Links: Transitions to second level

Links have been established with Primary feeder schools for the benefit of students transferring to Maryfield. In September 2007 teachers from a local primary school gave a talk/presentation to the whole staff on their curriculum, expectations of students , fears and anxieties of students before entering first year. Guidance Counsellor will do follow up by visiting 6<sup>th</sup> year classes before entry to Maryfield.

#### Links with UCAS and UK Colleges

Contact is maintained with UK colleges by phone, email and through correspondence. The Guidance Counsellor meets with representatives from these colleges annually at the Higher Options Careers 'Conference. Representatives from the colleges are occasionally invited to the school to give careers talks to students.

#### Links with Qualifax

Qualifax is the National Course Database established by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. It is an invaluable source of information for students, parents as well as guidance counselors. The Guidance Counsellor in Maryfield has a direct email link to Qualifax and is thereby kept informed of relevant changes in careers.

#### Links with NCGE

The National Centre for Guidance in Education is a valuable resource. Its role is to support and develop guidance practice in all areas of education and to inform the policy of the DES in the field of guidance. Links are maintained with NCGE for support in practice.

#### Links with IGC

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors is the professional body representing guidance practitioners. As a member of the National Executive of IGC, the Guidance Counsellor in Maryfield works to ensure a vast range of policies are implemented for the protection of the student and practitioners.

## **Section 11: Guidance and Learning Support: The Role of Guidance in promoting educational and social inclusion**

Education can play a key role in the promotion of a more inclusive society. Educational qualifications, or lack of them, have a major role in determining the life chances of many people. Underachievement at school can prevent an individual from progressing into further education or training or obtaining stable employment.

Our school therefore acknowledges that it plays a role in meeting the educational and guidance needs of all students, including those who are socially, educationally and economically disadvantaged, those with special educational needs, as well as non-nationals and other special and ethnic groups.

These students require access to a guidance programme that allows them to explore the full range of learning and career opportunities available. An important part of this programme is the liaison between the Guidance Counsellor and the Learning Support Teacher.

### **Liaison between the Guidance Counsellor and the Learning Support Teacher**

The school endeavours to provide as much support as possible to students with special needs (allowing for time and resource constraints). Planning for guidance therefore includes planning for students with special needs. The following is the current practice:

The Learning Support Teacher attends regular meetings of the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group.

The Guidance Counsellor and the Learning Support Teacher liaise on an on-going basis and have formal meetings at various times throughout the academic year.

Meetings are held for the following reasons:

- To make decisions relating to diagnosis and assessment of students with learning difficulties/ special needs
- On-going monitoring of students with special needs
- Planning for assessment/testing e.g. incoming first years
- Decisions on type of tests to administer
- Ordering of tests
- Correcting of tests
- Decisions re referring students to the NEPS Psychologist or to other psychologists/agencies
- Referrals from the Guidance Counsellor to the Learning Support Teacher
- These may arise as a result of direct contact between the student and the Guidance Counsellor or through contact between another staff member (e.g. subject teacher) and the Guidance Counsellor.
- Case conference in relation to a particular student
- Post incoming first year assessments in order to identify students that may require further assessment and learning as well as guidance support on entry to the school
- Post fifth year aptitude tests
  - to evaluate students currently receiving learning support

- to identify other students requiring learning support

### **Liaison between the Guidance Counsellor and other staff members in relation to special needs**

There is on-going liaison, in relation to special needs students, between the Guidance Counsellor and the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Tutors and Subject Teachers. Meetings are concerned with a wide range of topics, in particular those mentioned above. Concerns relating to students with special needs are constantly raised (e.g. by staff at a general staff meeting) and continuous efforts are made to address them.

### **Guidance interventions for students with special needs**

#### **Aims:**

To build confidence and improve self-esteem

To improve concentration and motivation

To work with students in order to find a direction that both matches their strengths to their interests and can lead to realistic career paths and employment options

#### **Actions:**

Finding a career path, as well as gaining the skills necessary to access information is often more difficult for students with special needs.

These students have access to all the facilities and resources within the school guidance service.

The Guidance Counsellor, having identified these students, will, in a caring and sensitive manner, through class work and one to one meetings, give specific support to them.

Students are given opportunity and time to explore their strengths, interests and options. Specific areas where these students require extra help include decision making in relation to subject choices, senior cycle options and career/ job options. Extra help as far as possible is given in these areas.

Individual help is where possible also given with: College application procedures, filling up application forms for colleges/jobs, CV preparation, letter writing, personal statements for colleges or employers, interview and presentation skills.

Through the TY and LCVP work experience programmes, skills for finding work placements (and later jobs) are developed.

Students with special needs are also given help with study skills and goal setting. Guidance to improve self esteem is given on a one to one basis, as well as encouragement through class contact.

### **Individual Guidance Plan for students with special needs**

- Vocational actions: subject choice, career planning etc
- Educational actions: addressing specific needs
- Psycho-social actions: relaxation, counselling....
- Environmental: facilities, surroundings, finance, transport...
- Psycho-motor: includes assistive technology and /or mobility
- Medical: necessary to have information on background in this area

## **Section 12: Careers: Out of class learning experiences**

### **Attendance of students at Careers events / Open Days accompanied by the Guidance Counsellor and the other teacher(s)**

Fifth and Sixth year students attend certain Careers Events/ College Open Days accompanied by the Guidance Counsellor and depending on the number of students, by the teacher also.

Examples are:

Higher Options Careers Conference- usually held in September

Trinity College Open Day- usually in December

Fas Opportunities Career Exhibition- usually in January

University College Dublin Open Day- usually in March

#### **Procedure for attendance at the above:**

Student must first request permission to attend from the Guidance Counsellor.

The student then signs a record book indicating the date, place and purpose of the out school visit.

The student is given a “parent consent form” which must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the Careers Office at least two days before the event.

On this consent form the following must be completed:

- Name of College/Event
- Purpose of visit
- Date, times of visit
- Time leaving school- if applicable
- Signature of parent/guardian

The same procedure outlined above applies to all out of school Careers events with the exception of the Higher Options Conference. In this case a letter is given to students, which outlines the details of the event. At the end of this letter is a detachable permission slip. Parents are requested to sign this and return it to the Guidance Counsellor accompanied by the entrance fee for the Conference. (This fee is charged by the organisers of the Conference). Admission tickets are then purchased for the students.

In preparation for these out of class learning experiences students are advised of all arrangements beforehand, for example: venue, travel arrangements, meeting point, time

of assembly. Students make their own way by public transport to and from these events. A roll call is taken in the morning and afternoon.

In order to make the best use of time and to ensure a valuable learning experience, students will have planned their day beforehand e.g. what lectures and events to attend. They are also given worksheets to complete.

Student evaluation takes place in the Careers classes, subsequent to events.

School procedure for student attendance unaccompanied by the teacher:

Fifth and Sixth year students are allowed to attend Careers Open Days, with parental permission, unaccompanied by a teacher.

The same procedure as above applies except for the follow up:

When the student returns the “parent consent forms” to the careers office a work-sheet is given to the student by the Guidance Counsellor. This work-sheet must be completed on the day of the outing and given to the student’s Form Tutor at roll call the following morning.

The work-sheet ensures that the out of class event has been a valuable learning experience for the student. It also serves as a check on attendance at the event. Failure to return a work-sheet means that the student will be marked absent on the roll and the necessity of providing a parental explanatory note applies.

## **Section 13: Administration of the Guidance and Counselling Service**

Administration of the service necessitates time spent each week by the Guidance Counsellor in carrying out clerical and administrative duties.

The following gives a brief outline of these duties:

### **13.1 Information collation**

Information gathering, organisation and dissemination are an essential and important function carried out on a daily basis.

Managing this information involves:

Visits to College Open Days

Work place visits

Visits to Career Exhibitions

Visits to Fas or other agencies

Organising visiting speakers to the school

Arranging access to computers and information technology

Disseminating information to classes and groups

Continuous research to ensure availability of most recent information

### **13.2 Administration for testing**

Collating all materials required before testing such as question booklets, answer sheets

Ordering new materials from suppliers

Liaising with other staff in organising seating arrangements

Collating all materials post testing

Correcting answer sheets or arranging for computerised marking of tests

Transfer of invoices to office for necessary payment to suppliers

### **13.3 Managing the Guidance Library**

Ensuring up to date information is available

Filing careers books, prospectuses, leaflets, videos, C.D's and other relevant information

Arranging and organising borrowing of materials

Keeping records of materials borrowed and returned

### **13.4 Office organisation and filing e.g.**

Filing student records

Filing materials for careers, counselling and educational matters

Record keeping of attendance at open days and other careers events

Computer work

Storing of confidential testing and other resources

Organising appointments and distributing appointment slips

Record keeping of individual guidance appointments

### **13.5 Correspondence**

Correspondence takes place between the Guidance service and a variety of people and organisations.

Some examples are:

Parents

Third Level and Further Education Colleges

Employers/ work placement personnel

Industry and representatives of industry

Visiting speakers

Psychologists

Counselling agencies

CAO, UCAS, Failte Ireland and other such bodies etc

References for UCAS colleges and work experience placements

### **13.6 Phone calls**

The work of the Guidance Counsellor necessitates phone calls being made to others and received from others on a daily basis. Some examples are:

To / from parents

To/from Third Level/ Further Education Colleges

To/from employers/work placement contacts

To/from industry representatives

To/from organisations such as STEPS, AHEAD

To/from visiting speakers

To/from psychologists ( NEPS and other)

To/from counselling agencies

To/from CAO, UCAS and other bodies involved in education etc!

### **13.7 Programme development and planning**

There is no set curriculum for careers classes therefore it is necessary for the Guidance Counsellor to plan the content of the careers programmes

This involves writing the guidance programme

It also involves keeping abreast with new developments in careers and courses and incorporating these into the guidance programme

Evaluating the effectiveness of the programmes

Liaising with other staff members in relation to programmes such as SPHE, CSPE, TY, LCVP

### **13.8 Report writing**

Assessment reports for students based on class work

Occasionally behaviour reports on students

Reports for psychologists, counselling agencies etc...

Policy documents

### **13.9 School planning evaluation**

Evaluation of the Guidance and Counselling service in conjunction with the school plan is ongoing. This involves:

Organising and chairing meetings of the School Guidance and Counselling Planning Group

Writing agenda for meetings

Keeping records of meetings/ items discussed/decisions made...

Engaging in correspondence, phone calls report writing involved in the planning process

Distributing written information to the partners involved in planning

Planning, devising and distributing surveys to the partners

### **13.10 Notice Board**

An important resource in information dissemination to students, staff and parents is the Careers Notice Board on the main corridor and the Staff Notice Board in the staff room. These are a means of conveying any relevant information in graphic form under the diverse areas of guidance. This is an effective means of communicating with the wider school population. Administration of these involves:

Providing current information in relation to careers, courses

Information re new developments in courses, CAO, UCAS etc

Providing information on legal rights, health related matters etc

Providing “student support” phone numbers/ names/addresses of helping agencies

Ensuring notices/posters/phone numbers are accurate and current

## **Section 14**

### **Continuing Professional Development for the Guidance Counsellor**

#### **Supervision for counselling;**

“Supervision is a working alliance between a supervisor and counsellor in which the counsellor can offer an account or recording of her work; reflect on it; receive feedback, and where appropriate, guidance” ( Inskipp & Proctor,1993)

The Guidance Counsellor has been given Tuesday afternoon to avail of Supervision and CPD and avails of this through the Drumcondra branch of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors.

#### **In-service**

The Guidance Counsellor from time to time attends other in-service This includes information meetings with the HEI’s, conferences/workshops on various areas such as Future Skills Needs; IT courses and courses dealing with suicide, depression, marital breakdown, alcohol and substance abuse and other issues that affect teenagers.

## **Section 15: Policies**

The Guidance Planning Group has been working on policies since 2005.

Policies on Homework and Anti-bullying and SPHE have been fully completed.

Policies on Study Skills, Subject Choice, Critical Incidents and Bereavement are at different stages in the planning process. All of the former have been drafted and presented to staff. The Bereavement policy is being redrafted and will be presented to staff at the November 2007 staff meeting.

Copies available in the school.



## **Review of the Guidance Plan 2007-2010**

### **Review of the Guidance Plan 2007-2008**

A guidance inspection was undertaken by DES on 12th November 2007. The report on this inspection was issued on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

Following on this inspection the Guidance Plan was reviewed. Actions were planned and where possible were undertaken.

- Following discussions with all the relevant partners and as a result of advice from the Guidance Inspectorate and NEPS a decision was made to discontinue administering the AH tests to incoming first years. Since April 2008 more up-to-date and more suitable tests have been administered.
- The recommendations made by the inspectorate in relation to career topics in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year SPHE were extensively discussed with Principal, Deputy Principal, SPHE co-ordinator and Guidance personnel.
- This recommendation poses challenges in terms of time-tabling, devising modules and delivery of modules by qualified guidance personnel.
- However, it should be noted that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years benefit from the following guidance activities: study skills classes; subject choice classes; visits on an intermittent basis to classes by guidance personnel; consultation with the Guidance Counsellor in relation to good practice for study and to assist with decision making prior to subject choice; personal and social appointments with guidance personnel. In addition the Guidance Counsellor delivers an annual presentation to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students and their parents. This is followed up by a further presentation by subject teachers and the Guidance Counsellor to students. During this presentation students are facilitated to ask about subject content and future career choices resulting from subject choices.
- It was decided that the Guidance Counsellor would attend TY assembly on a regular basis to inform students of opportunities in third level colleges for work placements, workshops and seminars.
- It was agreed in principle by the Board of Management to replace the existing careers office /library and to provide a more modern and accessible suite.

