



Coláiste Iognáid S.J.

Guidance Policy

2018 - 2019

Table of Contents

1. What is School Guidance?
2. Aims of the School Guidance Plan
 - 2.1 Rationale
 - 2.2 Value Statement
 - 2.3 Aims of the School Guidance Plan
3. Target Groups
4. Objectives and Activities
 - 4.1 Senior Cycle Objectives
 - 4.2 Senior Cycle Activities
 - 4.3 Junior Cycle Objectives
 - 4.4 Junior Cycle Activities
5. Current Guidance Provision
 - 5.1 Provision to all years
 - 5.2 First Year Guidance Programme
 - 5.3 Second Year Programme
 - 5.4 Third Year Programme
 - 5.5 Transition Year Programme
 - 5.6 Fifth Year Programme
 - 5.6 Sixth Year Programme
 - 5.7 Careers Day
6. Yearly Plan
7. Assessment and Testing in Coláiste Iognáid
8. Guidance Supporting Personnel and Links Stakeholders
9. Monitoring and Review
10. Resources
11. Action Plan 2015-2016

1. What is School Guidance?

In this plan, the term guidance will be used to refer to all guidance and counselling activities and student support services in the school. Guidance in schools refers to 'a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions consequent on these choices' (NCGE 2004). These choices can be categorised into three separate but interlinked areas;

- **Personal and Social:** covers emotional and psychological areas
- **Educational:** concerns the intellectual development of the pupils
- **Vocational/ career:** concerns exploring career options

Guidance activities that assist students to make choices include

1. **Counselling:** the provision of a safe environment where students can explore their thoughts and feelings, learn how to cope with personal issues and learn how to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions.
2. **Assessment:** using psychometric tests and other interest inventories to help the students obtain a better self-understanding and to help them make educational, vocational and personal decisions.
3. **Information:** providing students with objective, factual and up-to-date information on educational and occupational opportunities as well as helping them to interpret and use this information.
4. **Educational Development Programmes:** facilitating the development of study skills, exam technique as well as helping students choose subjects and levels.
5. **Personal and Social Development Programmes:** facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to a student's personal and social development, self-awareness decision making and planning.
6. **Referrals:** There are two types of referrals.
 - (a) Students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by an individual teacher, by school management or through the pastoral care team.

- (b)** Where an issue is beyond the scope of the school guidance service, a student may be referred to other professionals outside the school such as NEPS (the National Educational Psychological Service).

2. Aims of the school Guidance Plan

2.1 Rationale

Our rationale in relation to Guidance will primarily be underpinned by Jesuit thinking on education. We are mindful that an essential part of Jesuit mission is to create men and women for others. Ignatian thinking promotes a view of personal talents as gifts to be developed for the good of the human community at large and not merely for personal benefit. This will have a significant bearing on our approach to Vocational and Educational Guidance in Coláiste Iognáid.

Our policy on Guidance is also heavily influenced by the realisation that we are living in a time of enormous change. The rate of development driven by technology and globalisation means that organisations are constantly exposed to growth. Security lies not in employment but in employability, so individuals constantly need to learn new skills. The guidance programme of Coláiste Iognáid will help students develop self-awareness, career management skills and a self-directed approach to life long education.

2.2 Value Statement

This policy will provide clarity of purpose between and among all stakeholders in keeping with the school's mission and in compliance with current legislation.

2.3 Aims of the School Guidance Plan

1. For Coláiste Iognáid to fulfil its obligation in relation to The Education Act (1998) which states that 'a school shall use its available resources to ...ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices and to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students'.
2. To develop further the concept of Whole School Guidance which will involve the appropriate members of the school community in the provision of a guidance service.
3. To assist in evaluating the School Guidance Programme and the quality of student supports.

3. Target Groups

The School Guidance Service is open and accessible to all students. However, the School Guidance Programme in Coláiste Iognáid recognises that there are students who need to have priority access to the service. These include, but are not limited to students who

- are undergoing a personal difficulty
- are affected by bereavement, separation, divorce or another loss
- are underachieving academically
- have issues to do with behaviour
- are new to the school
- have been bullied
- have issues with school attendance

The Guidance Service is available to all year groups. First, Second and Third Years have one timetabled SPHE class per week. In terms of Guidance Counselling hours, priority is given to First Years, Transition Years groups and Sixth Years. Transition Years have timetabled classes. First Years are also a target group in that the Guidance Service aims to assist them with their transition to secondary school and to help them with subject choice.

4. Objectives and Activities

4.1 Objectives (Senior Cycle)

- It is our endeavour that all senior students should have frequent access to a Guidance Counsellor. We would intend that these meetings would answer all Students' Educational and Vocational guidance needs and would assist them in making well informed choices about their lives.
- As a result of the Guidance programme, students will be enabled to make informed decisions concerning further education and the world of work. These decisions will be based on a sound knowledge of their own personality, aptitudes, interests and values. Through individual meetings with the Guidance Counsellors and access to Guidance events they will have the opportunity to explore the many options available to them post leaving Cert and to make appropriate educational and career decisions. Students at Transition Year level will be made aware of the implications of subject choice on future career and educational options. Through the Social Outreach Programme we would hope that our students would experience the world of work and move towards the Jesuit educational idea of becoming "a man (or woman) for others"

4.2 Activities (Senior Cycle)

- Students will have a guidance module in Transition Year.
- The Guidance Counsellor will be available to meet individually with senior students to discuss all educational and career matters and will assist students in making appropriate educational decisions.
- Students will be given the opportunity to do and receive feedback on aptitude tests, interest inventories, personality tests/ questionnaires.
- Students will be well briefed on the application process for entry to third level as well as entry to alternative training and further education routes.
- Students will be educated in job seeking skills such as CV preparation, letter writing and interview techniques.
- Students will be helped in completing career investigation, Curriculum Vitae and letters of job application.
- Students will be given interview training.
- Students will regularly be invited to listen to speakers from 3rd level colleges, the world of business and voluntary and community enterprises.
- Students will be encouraged to attend the school Careers day.
- Students will be informed of upcoming events and subject to demand they will be accompanied to relevant open days and exhibitions.

- Parents of Leaving Cert students will be invited to a presentation on applying to college and options for school leavers.
- Transition Year students entering senior cycle will be given presentations and information concerning subject choice for Leaving Certificate. In conjunction with subject teachers, students will be advised on content of syllabi for Leaving Certificate and their suitability to the subject.
- Students will be educated on the use of IT in career research. They will also be given demonstrations on online application procedures for CAO and UCAS. They will have access to the computer room for career research where possible.
- The Guidance Counsellors will liaise as appropriate with NEPS

4.3 Objectives (Junior Cycle)

- It is our intention that the Junior Guidance Programme, in conjunction with the work of the pastoral care teams and the mentoring work of senior students, should be instrumental in easing the transition to secondary school. In conjunction with the S.E.N Department we aim to ensure that personal or learning difficulties are detected as early as possible and to foster good habits of learning and study. 1st and 2nd Year students are introduced to study skills and bullying.
- Students entering second year will be made aware of the implications of subject choice on future career and educational options.
- Through the Guidance and SPHE Programmes students will begin the process of developing self-awareness and acquiring decision making skills.

4.4 Activities (Junior Cycle)

- Incoming students will be assessed on literacy, numeracy and reading skills by the S.E.N. Department.
- Incoming students will be inducted by a team of staff.
- Incoming students will be made part of a mentor system with senior students.
- Incoming students should be introduced to the different elements of the Guidance Service and the availability and the role of the guidance counsellor should be explained to them.
- All first year students will have the opportunity to meet with a Guidance Counsellor to establish contact to discuss pertinent issues relating to school/education matters.
- 3rd Years will participate in a study skills seminar.

5. Current Guidance Provision

5.1 All years

- Meetings with year head and pastoral care teams regarding counselling and guidance needs of individual students
- Individual counselling and guidance available to a student experiencing personal difficulties or difficulties with study and decision making
- Each class does a yearly one day retreat organised by the school Chaplain who is usually accompanied by a class tutor, a religion teacher and a subject teacher or guidance counsellor
- Information dissemination to students, parents and teachers
- Referrals to and from the Guidance Counsellor
- Assessment
- Maintenance of careers library
- Organisation of Sixth Year students to Higher Options Convention.
- Organisation of guest speakers
- Organisation of 'Options West' for Fifth Year students

5.2 First Year Guidance Programme

1. Prepare and administer tests to determine who needs remedial teaching. This is in conjunction with the S.E.N. Department
2. Introduction of role of guidance counsellor
3. Discuss the subject choice systems in the school
4. Distribute and collect autobiographical and bullying questionnaire for use when meeting first years for individual appointments and bring to the attention of the care teams, or referral if necessary. (To be reviewed)

5. Liaise with Year Head, SPHE co-ordinator/ teachers and care teams in relation to the transition from primary to secondary school and the following areas in particular

- Making friends
- Respect and self-esteem
- Bullying
- Using journal, study skills
- Time Management
- Homework plan

6. Meet students individually in need of one-to-one personal, social or educational guidance and where necessary arrange referral to outside agency

7. Mentoring programme

5.3: Second Year

1. Liaise with management, year heads, teachers and care teams

2. Individual counselling if required

3. Meet parents by appointment

4. In consultation with management make referrals to outside agencies where necessary

5. SPHE programme: bullying, motivation and goal-setting, building of self-esteem and relationships with parents etc.

5.4: Third Year

1. Liaise with management, year heads, teachers and care teams

2. Individual counselling if required

3. Meet parents by appointment or contact by telephone

4. In consultation with management make referrals to outside agencies where necessary.

5. Review study skills and exam technique

6. SPHE programme: organising time, study, healthy relationships, communication skills, healthy life-style, body-image, decision making, drugs, moods, depression, preparation for exams etc.

5.5: Transition Year

1. Each of the four transition year groups have a careers class once a week Particular attention paid to subject choice for fifth year including Parent Evening.
2. Administration of Cambridge Profile, Aptitude Testing by Alan o Loinsigh, senior guidance counsellor
3. Return of Cambridge Profile tests results. Mr. Alan o Loinsigh meets with individual students to relay results of Cambridge Profile tests and discuss implications for subject choice
4. She is also available to meet parents to discuss results
5. Guest speakers organised
6. All students do one week each term of scheduled work experience

A detailed plan is enclosed in the yearly plan outlining topics covered in the module. See P. 12-14

5.6 Fifth Years

1. Annual 'Careers Day' in school, representatives from a wide range of different careers, colleges and services visit our school
2. Parent Information Evening on UCAS, Eunicas, HPAT aptitude test, CAO, Hear and Dare schemes,
3. Explanation on new Leaving Certificate grading and points scale.
4. Study skills session (or in LC)
5. 'Options West' and NUIG open days

See P.15-17

5.6 Sixth Years

Individual counselling to help students make informed decisions about personal, educational and career issues. Average time spent with each Leaving Certificate student individually is 40-45 minutes. Some students require two or more sessions.

Education

- Assist student's research and decide which courses and colleges will enable them achieve career plans. Assist in filling in or checking application forms.
- For Ireland: CAO, PLCs, Private Colleges, Montessori, Apprenticeships
- Abroad: UCAS courses, Eunicas, USA Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and sport scholarships etc.

- August: Guidance Counsellor available at the time of the Leaving Certificate Results
 - September/ October: Attend open days: NUIG, GMIT, Higher Options West etc
 - September-January: Organise guest speakers from 3rd level colleges
 - November : Information Night for parents on CAO, PLC courses and other options
 - September- December: assist students with initial CAO applications and choices
- Areas covered in class
1. Devising a timetable and time management
 2. Preparation for Open days and Higher Options and Higher Options West Conference
 3. Decision making with the aid of interest inventories
 4. Familiarisation with websites e.g. Qualifax, Careers Portal
 5. The national Qualifications Framework
 6. How to use CAO handbook
 7. How to use a college prospectus
 8. Organising guest speakers to speak to a class. E.g. from NUIG, GMIT, GTI, the defence forces
 9. Other options for Leaving Cert Students.

See P. 15-17 for a more detailed term by term account is included in the Leaving Certificate Yearly Plan.

6. Yearly Plan for 6th Years and Transition Year

6.1 Transition Year

There are four groups 4B, 4C, 4R, 4G and they will have one guidance lesson each per week.

AIMS:

- ‘Guidance and Counselling denotes a range of interventions and activities provided by a school on a developmental basis to assist pupils to make decisions of an educational, career, personal and social nature. The term ‘Guidance’ denotes such a range of interventions and activities.

(Department of Education, May, 1996)

Section 9 of the Education Act 1998 states that a school shall use its available resources to ‘ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.’

- Our aim is to satisfy the above criteria.

OBJECTIVES:

- To give clear information concerning subject choices. This includes information about the consequence of subject choice and level taken for future educational training and career options.
- Opportunities to explore their interests and subject choices and how these link to further education, training and careers.
- An awareness of the content and syllabus demands of particular subjects.
- Objective assessment of their aptitudes, achievements, and interests and individual feedback on these assessments. (in particular Cambridge Profiles)
- Focus on self-awareness and current work values.
- Develop decision making skills and oral communication/presentation skills.
- Guidance on the educational, vocational and career options available, including career progression routes and lifelong opportunities.
- Encouragement to explore a wide range of educational and career choices.
- Preparation for the world of work, guidelines re: work experience, preparation of curriculum vitae, letters of application and work experience.
- Evaluation of Work Experience

- Opportunities to develop information seeking skills, including the use of ICT, with particular reference to career exploration and planning.
- Guidance in developing individual career plans based on the individual's achievements, ambitions, interests and personal circumstances.
- To liaise with subject teachers to ensure that students have best information regarding subject choice at senior level.
- To provide students with up to date information on subject choice for Leaving Certificate

GENERAL CONTENT:

- Mr. Alan o Loinsigh is available to the Transition classes for personal, educational and vocational counselling on an individual basis, in class and for the administration and giving of the results of the Cambridge Profile.
- A Guidance Counsellor is timetabled with each Transition Year class for 1 guidance class.
- The Cambridge Profile aptitude tests are administered in September. Each student is met individually by Mr. O'Loinisigh where the results of these tests are discussed in conjunction with Junior Certificate results, interest test results, the student's career research to date, hobbies and interests, work experience etc. This is to facilitate students with their impending Leaving Certificate subject choice decisions and career choices.

Guidance Class – [1 class per week]J O’Sullivan

<p>Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage pupils to examine career options, subject choice and to introduce pupils to the tools to research careers
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will be able to compose a CV and save it electronically • Pupils will know how to research careers in which they have an interest • Pupils will reflect on work experience placements in order to confirm/rule out career choices • Pupils will research subject choices for senior cycle • Pupils will become familiar with tools for career research such as careersportal.ie and qualifax.ie • Pupils will undertake online and paper based career and personality tests
<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV composition • Career awareness and career investigation

- Work placement evaluation
- National framework of qualification
- Personality tests
- Career interest tests
- Project on a chosen career
- Introduction to college websites

Resources

- Qualifax.ie
- Careersportal.ie
- Various college websites
- Worksheets

Teaching Strategies

- Group work
- Pair work (think, pair, share strategy)
- Computer based learning
- Presentations by pupils
- Formal input by teacher

Differentiated Teaching Strategies

- Reduce tasks and simplify project requirements for weaker pupils

Links to learning support/ resource Regular meetings with learning support teacher

Number of teachers: 1

Number of pupils: approx 28 per class

Assessment

- Completion of worksheets/booklets given in class
- Completion of CV
- Projects & presentations on a chosen career
- Review and correction of folder and worksheets

6.2 Senior Cycle (Fifth and Sixth Year) Plan.

First Term

- Career action plan and planning the year ahead
- Goal Setting
- Completion of a Pre-interview form to be used in one-to-one meetings with Sixth Years. 1 on 1 interviews will be from November 5 – January 20.
- Study skills with goals in mind
- Revision re National Framework of Qualifications
- Introduction to CAO and UCAS application deadlines
- Distribute CAO application packs at the end of September and ask students to underline important details in handbook
- Career interview with each student
- Research into courses of interest using college prospectuses and online websites
- Interest inventories completed online using careers portal and qualifax
- Preparation for college open days and ‘Options West’
- Group guidance for UCAS applicant using UCAS website, Eunicas and other resources
- Guest speakers from NUIG, GMIT and from faculty of Arts, Science, Commerce, Engineering etc.
- **Use of CAO demonstration facility**
- Preparation for Mock Leaving Cert in February
- Information night for Leaving Cert parents on CAO and other options
- Explain DARE and HEAR schemes and contact parents with information of Advice Clinics etc.
- All information is loaded to a Drop box account for access by students.

Second Term

- Learning from Mock exams and resetting goals.
- Reminder of DARE and HEAR schemes
- Revision of progression from level 7 and 8 courses
- CAO online (computer room)
- Order and distribute exemption forms from NUI
- Compare CAO courses online using Qualifax
- Check Mock LC results for at risk students and those who may need to think about dropping a level
- Parent teacher meeting and consultation with parents where necessary
- Guest speaker on study skills
- Prepare individual students for UCAS suitability tests, interview and application for Scranton scholarship
- Involvement in school Careers day
- Higher Education Grants

Third Term

- Preparation for PLC talks and explain progression
Guest Speakers from GTI and Galway Community College
- Sports Scholarships
- Access Courses
- Transferable Skills and development at 3rd level
- Letters of Application, CV and Interviews

- CAO process at offer and acceptance stage
- Exam techniques
- Going to college
- Other options and deadlines for application
- Information on campus accommodation

Other Leaving Cert Services

- Career notice boards
- Careers Library
- Lending scheme from careers office
- Organise and accompany to Open Days at NUIG, GMIT, Limerick Colleges, GTI and Options West.

7. Assessment and Testing in Coláiste Iognáid

7.1 Statement on the use of Assessment and Testing in Coláiste Iognáid

Aptitude and other educational assessments are useful insofar as they provide useful information to the Guidance Counsellor and others for whom it is relevant.

- Assessment is an intensely personal activity and therefore we believe that only those who have some good and well intentioned reasons for knowing them should have access to the results.
- When giving feedback on aptitude tests we bear in mind that the information could potentially damage the recipient; particularly in the case where the results are weak. Sensitivity and confidentiality, therefore, are of paramount importance. It is also important that we be appropriately tentative in interpreting tests and provide the information in an age appropriate form.
- We attach great importance to the security of test materials and results.

- Review of tests. Tests should be reviewed on an annual basis by management, guidance counsellors and the learning support team to ensure that they are up to date and relevant for the intended student cohort.

7.2 Referrals to the Guidance Counsellors or outside agencies.

Referrals may come to the Guidance Counsellor from staff, parents, principal or deputy principal or care teams . It is important that a student never be compelled to attend the Guidance Counsellor and we respect this choice.

The Guidance Counsellor in turn may decide that the difficulties encountered by a particular student require expertise outside of his/her training and may refer to an agency such as Jigsaw, NEPS, family doctors or other outside agencies

7.3 Entrance Test for incoming First Year Students

The entrance test for incoming first year students consists of

- Profile of Maths Skills (level 1, Form A)
- Cloze Reading Test 3
- English and Irish essays for applicants to the Irish Stream
- An Irish oral for applicants to the Irish stream.

These tests help with the division of pupils into mixed ability classes and identify those in need of learning support. Incoming pupils are given the entrance test in March. The test is administered and scored by members of the Learning Support Department and by the Guidance Department.

7.4 Transition Year Students: The Cambridge Profile

The Cambridge Profile battery of eight tests are administered to all Transition Year students in September. The tests are administered by the full- time Guidance Councillor at Coláiste Iognáid and are machine scored. The results of the Cambridge Profile are given personally to each student during the interview time with their Guidance Counsellor. No test result comparisons are made between students. These results are seen as much of a source of encouragement as they are a career indicator. Parents are always welcome to discuss the results of the tests where clarification of their significance is provided.

7.5 Other Interest Tests

Online Interest Tests: Rothwell/ Miller, Career Directions, Careers Portal Interest Test.

Students will also take the John Holland online Interest test.

Students will also undertake the Cattell 16 PF Personality test.

8. Guidance supporting personnel and links with other teams and stakeholders

This policy recognises that Guidance is a whole school activity and that links to other planning teams, academic and extra-curricular activities and other stakeholders in Colaiste Iognáid are paramount. Many members of the Guidance Team are also part of other teams such as the Pastoral Care Team and the Chaplaincy. There are also strong links with the SPHE department. One of the aims of this year's Action plan is to formalise and strengthen links with Year Heads and with parent groups through the Parents Council.

The Guidance Planning Team

The members of the Guidance Planning Team are:

The Deputy Principal: Ms Catherine Hickey

Senior Guidance Counsellor: Mr. Alan o Loinsigh

Part-time Guidance Counsellor: Julie O'Sullivan

Links with the Pastoral Care Team and the Chaplaincy

There is considerable overlap in personnel between the Guidance Planning Team, the Care Teams and the Chaplaincy. The Pastoral Care meetings provide an opportunity for all groups to discuss students in need of extra guidance or counselling.

Links with SPHE, Wellbeing, and P.E., and role in anti-bullying campaign

One of the Guidance Counsellors is also SPHE co-ordinator and regularly informs the Guidance Planning Team of SPHE related in-services and activities. Other members of the Guidance Planning team also attend SPHE meetings and are particularly involved in the co-ordination and implementation of anti-bullying policies. Coláiste Iognáid places great emphasis on the holistic development of the individual. This is supported by the SPHE programme in the school. Students are encouraged to become involved in extra-curricular activities and to look after their physical and mental health.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Board of Management

- To approve the policy
- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time.
- To consider reports from the principal on the implementation of the policy

2. Principal and Deputy Principal

- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy.
- To monitor the implementation of the policy

3. Guidance Counsellor.

- To monitor the effects of the policy and to identify students experiencing difficulty.
- To provide support and guidance, especially for those experiencing difficulty.
- To liaise with subject teachers and support staff, especially in relation to consideration for students with special educational needs.
- To give each student individual time to help them establish personal goals.
- To assess student progress.
- To keep records of interviews and progress.
- To organise trips out of school and visitors to come to the school.
- To regularly evaluate the Guidance Policy.

4. Parents

- Are encouraged to support the school guidance policy
- It is important that parents are made feel free and welcome to contact the Guidance Counsellor if they are concerned about their son/daughter.

5. Students are required:

- To attend the Guidance Office for interviews at appointed times.
- To participate in career events and outings where appropriate
- To carry out a career investigation in an area of their choice
- To attend Guidance classes at transition and Leaving Cert level.

Implementation Procedures:

- The principal will make provision on the timetable for the Guidance Classes.
- The Guidance Counsellors will draw up a Guidance Plan for each year.

- The Guidance Counsellors will draw up a rota for Guidance interviews.
- The Guidance Counsellors will meet with parents on request or speak with them when necessary.

9. Review and Monitoring Procedures:

Monitoring Procedures.

- The Guidance Counsellors will schedule appointments for first year, transition year and Leaving Cert students.
- The Guidance Counsellors will meet at regular intervals with the Deputy Principal, Principal, Year Heads, care teams and NEPS and psychologist when required.

Review procedures:

- The policy will be reviewed annually.
- Views and experiences of students, parents and teachers will be considered.

10. Resources used by Guidance Department to Support Student Reflection on Careers and Post-Secondary Education Choices

- College literature/prospectus,
- Web sites – Qualifax, Careersportal, CAO etc.
- Up to date information from 3rd level colleges and CAO
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Worksheets
- Videos/DVD's
- CAO Application packs
- Blackboard and chalk
- Guest speakers
- Careers Day in October
- SPHE Guidelines for teachers (NCCA)
- Rothwell Miller Interest Inventories, John Holland Interest Test
- Student Yearbook and Career Directory Part 1 and Part 2
- Cambridge Profile for Guidance
- Entrance Tests: Access Maths Test 1 (Form A) + CLOZE Reading Test + Essay
- CAT 4 Testing.
- Cattell 16 PF Personality Tests.

This Policy was adopted and signed on Monday 08th October 2018

This Policy will be reviewed in October 2019