



Whole School Guidance Plan

Rationale:

The school guidance plan is a structured document that describes the school guidance programme and specifies how the guidance needs of students are to be addressed. It is an integral part of St. Peter's College overall school development plan.

Guidance is a universal entitlement for all students in post-primary schools as per the Education Act (1998) which also requires schools to provide students with "appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices" (section 9c). In addition, schools are required to prepare a school guidance plan (section 21). *Planning the School Guidance Programme* (published by the National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE)) and Circular PPT 12/05 specify that schools are expected to develop a guidance plan as part of their overall School Development Plan.

The guidance plan was developed following the Guidance Counsellor's completion over six months of the HETAC qualification course 'Whole School Guidance Planning Programme' which was organised by the NCGE held in the Department of Education and Skills buildings in Marlborough Street. The course emphasised the guidance counsellor's obligation to consult with staff colleagues about the development of the plan. Consultation was facilitated through the Guidance Counsellor's ongoing membership of the Student Assessment and Learning Team (SALT) which is attended by one of the Deputy Principals, subject department heads and the learning support co-ordinator.

Scope of the plan

Guidance in second-level schools refers to a range of learning experiences, provided in a developmental sequence which assist students in the development of self-management skills and lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked, areas of

- Personal and Social Development
- Educational guidance
- Career guidance

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. Counselling may include personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling or combinations of these.

The plan addresses the guidance needs of all students at all levels within the school. As guidance is a whole school concern, the plan applies to school management and staff generally.

School Philosophy and Mission Statement

St. Peter's mission is to serve all of the young people in our community. The school seeks to provide the highest standard of education for academically talented and disadvantaged students in our community. The aim of St. Peter's College is to promote academic excellence in a supportive and caring environment.

St. Peter's guidance plan aims to assist the holistic development of all students so that they learn to develop and value their talents and abilities and effectively manage their personal transitions while at the same time learn to value and respect others and make a positive contribution to society.

The Aims of the Guidance Counselling Service – Guidance

To assist all students develop to their full potential.

Provide a framework for the delivery of the school's guidance programme.

To ensure a structured response to student's personal, social, educational and career guidance needs.

The plan is inclusive, providing for the junior, senior, minority, special education needs of all students.

To provide a caring and supportive service through the provision of a three-fold approach

1. Personal and Social – assist students foster developmental skills
2. Educational – advise students about subject and course options/study skills
3. Vocational – advise students about employment rights/career opportunities

The Aims of the Guidance Counselling Service – Counselling

To provide a non-judgemental counselling service on a one-to-one or group basis. This service seeks to help students in areas such as:

Decision making/Problem solving/Changing behaviours

The service is aimed at facilitating individual students in a holistic manner to realistically appraise their abilities, interests and aptitudes in order to make appropriate life choices and to achieve personal happiness.

Summary of Guidance Programme

The aim of the Guidance Counselling Programme is to assist students of all classes and abilities to develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities; to explore possibilities and opportunities open to them; to grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves; to make informed choices about their lives and to follow through on their choices.

Senior Cycle: The Guidance Programme is delivered on a modular basis to all 5th and 6th senior students. During the module, students are introduced to complexities of the CAO system and the learning supports and financial assistance available within third level

institutions. Students are provided lessons in the use of Qualifax and Careersportal. Personality tests are administered to enable students ascertain careers and courses that may compliment their personal traits. Parents of all senior students are also strongly encouraged to make appointments with the Guidance Counsellor in order to assist students with career and subject level decisions, and to attend information evenings about career and college choices.

Transition Year students are met by the Guidance Counsellor on an individual basis to discuss subject choices and levels and how these may affect their choice of career. Parents of Transition Year students attend the Senior Options Night and are informed about subject options and college entry requirements.

Junior Cycle: The Guidance Counsellor provides presentations to First Year students about the Guidance Service, study skills and the continuous assessment tests they will be sitting in First and Second Year.

Class Tutors of Junior Cycle classes are encouraged by the Guidance Department to make guidance appointments for students who may require support or advice regarding career information or school related issues.

Third Year students receive individual and class support in their choices for Transition year/5th Year. Senior Options Night is held each February for parents of 3rd Year students. In addition, the Guidance Counsellor organises an information morning for all 3rd year students at which teachers of senior subjects deliver a presentation to students about each available Leaving Certificate subject with reference to specific headings in order to assist students in their selection of subjects.

The Senior Options Booklet is revised each year and handed to each student/parent as a written means of information about subject and programme choices for students entering 5th year. Subject department heads update the booklet and provide a suitable subject analysis under specific headings.

Contents of Guidance Programme

1. Self-Assessment & Career Awareness	Career Interest Interest Tests Personality Career Values	Guidance Counsellor
2. Career Profile		Guidance Counsellor
3. Relating profile to career	Abilities Interests Aptitudes Strengths Weaknesses	Guidance Counsellor
4. Personality		Guidance Counsellor/SPHE
5. Available Career		Guidance Counsellor

Confidentiality

A professional relationship involving confidentiality is at the core of guidance counselling. The Guidance Counsellor takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all consultations with students takes place in an appropriately private environment. The Guidance Counsellor will take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about students obtained in the course of professional work. Information provided by students will only be discussed with other relevant parties in exceptional circumstances: when concealment would result in danger to the student or others and when required by the Law or designated guidelines; or for purposes of professional consultation or supervision.

Guidance Resources

Guidance Counsellor's office

Phone & Broadband

Computer/Printer networked to the main school network

Notice boards

Career Journals

Revision Booklets

Use of computer rooms for class and resources

The school library has recently been provided shelving to place prospectuses of local colleges. In addition, an assortment of relevant career directories is also available for students to borrow.

Current Policies related to Guidance

Child Protection Policy

Equality

Substance Abuse

Special Needs

Homework and Academic Achievement

IT and Information Provision

Critical Incident

Positive Discipline

SPHE / RSE

Pastoral Care

Anti Bullying

Guidance Areas for Development

Task 1

Review of First Year Assessment & Second Year Assessment

Since September 2011, the teaching staff in St. Peter's College has implemented FYA and SYA continuous testing for students. The Guidance Department has assisted in its introduction and development, and would consider it timely that parents, students and teachers participate in a survey to determine whether FYA and SYA should be continued or altered especially with the gradual introduction of the new Junior Certificate School Programme.

Guidance Areas of Development

Task 2

Following an investigation by the Guidance Department into the revision methods of Junior Cycle students, St. Peter's College has introduced its own Revision Booklet which facilitates and promotes active revision by students. The booklet has been produced to assist students personalise their revision time by dividing the booklet into two sections i.e. linear notes and mind maps. The Guidance Department is providing teachers who wish to participate in the scheme with sufficient numbers of booklets for their classes. The Guidance Department will investigate the effectiveness of the booklets by questioning students and teachers about its suitability in revising topics.