

St. Peter's Guidance Plan



"Live as free people"

Approved November 2017

1. TITLE – St. Peter’s Guidance Plan

2. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This school guidance plan is a structured document that describes our school guidance programme and specifies how the guidance needs of our students are addressed. It is an integral part of St. Peter’s overall school development plan.

This plan has been updated in accordance with needs, circumstances and resources, both in St. Peter’s and nationally.

3. SCOPE

Guidance in St. Peter’s refers to the range of learning experiences, provided in a developmental sequence, that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked areas of:

- Personal and Social development
- Educational guidance
- Career guidance

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

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

The nature and range of guidance activities include:

- Counselling
- Assessment
- Information
- Advice
- Educational development programmes
- Referral to: (a) Guidance Counsellor, or to (b) outside agencies
- Careers education
- Work Experience and Placement
- Consultation
- Follow-up
- Networking
- Promoting change

4. RATIONALE

Section 9 (c) of the Education Act, 1998 requires schools to: *"ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices"*. The provision of guidance is a statutory regulation for schools under this Act.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF SCHOOL

St. Peter’s Community School, Passage West, Co. Cork is a second level school and has an enrolment of 350 students approximately. Our Mission Statement is as follows:

"St. Peter's is a vibrant, dynamic school committed to the educational, personal and spiritual development of all its pupils. It has a Christian ethos within which other traditions are welcomed and respected. We encourage excellence by fostering a love of learning and by promoting a rich and diverse range of educational opportunities. We believe in empowering and equipping our pupils to become well qualified and rounded individuals who can thrive in and contribute to an ever changing world"

St. Peter's school population is very diverse; ranging from the very bright student to the student who has special need requirements. Our student population has changed a great deal over the past few years, becoming more and more a multi-cultural population. As a community, the school strives to meet the needs of our students, in a caring and safe environment, helping all to try and achieve their maximum potential.

Our school is situated in the lower harbour area, which is now a major centre for the Pharmaceutical Industry in Ireland. Obviously living in such an area allows great scope for contact with local employers which leads to school based work experience and also full time employment in a number of areas.

These areas in the past have included apprenticeships, chemical engineering, laboratory work in the chemical area, cadetships and general recruitment in the navy and also employment in the office administration area. Liaising with local employers for school visitations for career guidance purposes and for work experience for transition year have also proved to be very beneficial for the students in the past.

6. AIMS OF THE GUIDANCE COUNSELLING SERVICE IN ST. PETER'S

- Deal with all students in order to aid each of them in developing to their full potential.
- Provide a framework for the delivery of the school's guidance programme.
- Ensure a structured response to student's personal, social, educational and career guidance needs.
- The plan is inclusive and makes provision for every child in St. Peter's.
- The plan includes all guidance activities: classroom sessions, Vocational Guidance Interviews, attendance at career exhibitions, open days etc., meeting with management, support agencies etc., personal counselling etc.

7. OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS

- Develop awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities.
- Identify and explore opportunities.
- Grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves
- Make informed choices about their lives and follow through on these choices.
- Receive caring and non-judgemental one-to-one support, if required.

8. GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND SUPPORTS

Guidance Counsellors:

Ms. Blainid Quane

Ms. Siobhan Murphy (Second Year Trainee)

In addition the following personnel may be involved in guidance:

In school:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Special Needs Co-ordinator
- Learning Support Teachers
- Chaplain
- TY Co-ordinator
- RE Teachers
- Year Heads
- Class Tutors
- Subject Teachers
- Representatives of the student body

- Board of Management
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- Outside agencies:
- NEPS
 - CAHMS
 - TÚSLA
 - Colleges
 - SOLAS
 - Employers
 - Gardaí and Defence Forces
 - DES
 - SES

Materials

- Use of Computer Room and Internet
- Guidance Office
- Notice Board
- Books and Prospectus'

9. CONTENT OF PROGRAMME

Overview of areas covered from First to Sixth year

- Individual career guidance
- Individual counselling
- Class contact (First Year)
- Class contact when required (other years)
- Psychometric Testing
- Subject Option Information and Guidance
- Work Experience
- Subject choice
- Liaising with employers and training organisations
- Liaising with outside agencies
- Organising participation in various third level college programmes.
- Organising attendance at Open Days and at Career Exhibitions.
- Meeting parents.
- Liaising with staff regarding subjects, levels, psychological reports etc.
- Arranging guest speakers
- Leaving Certificate and TY information meetings

JUNIOR CYCLE

First Year

- Incoming first year students sit an entrance assessment in January. CAT4 Level D is the current test in use. Results are assessed by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Guidance Personnel and SEN Personnel and utilised as required.
- Parents are invited to meet the Principal for an individual meeting on the day of the entrance assessment. Parents submit an information and special request form which are used to facilitate an easier transition for their child.
- The Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain or SEN Co-ordinator meet the Primary school teachers regarding each incoming student prior to their arrival.
- One guidance class per week
- An individual meeting between each first year student and Guidance Counsellor.
- Six option subjects are trialled until February. Then students are assisted to make informed subject choices. Parents are welcome to meet with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Individual counselling if required.

Second Year

- Monitoring individual student's performance and progress and relevant target setting.
- Test administration.
- Counselling as required.

Third Year

- Monitoring individual student's performance and progress and relevant target setting.
- Counselling as required.
- Study Skills Seminar

SENIOR CYCLE

Fourth Year

- Work Experience
- Twelve option subjects are trialled for the year. The students have individual meetings to make informed subject choices for senior cycle and in relation to subject entry requirements and levels for third level education.
- Parents are welcome to meet with the Guidance Counsellor.

Fifth Year

- Monitoring individual students' performance and progress and relevant target setting.
- Counselling as required.
- Study Skills Seminar
- Career Exhibitions, Open Days and Guest Speakers.

Sixth Year

- Individual Vocational Guidance interviews with each student to discuss possible course and career choices. Psychometric Test results, interest questionnaires and academic results are used to help students make the best decision possible.
- Assistance with CAO and UCAS applications, DARE, HEAR and Personal Statements and Interview Skills.
- Additional individual meetings with each student to assist motivation and study.
- Parents and students attend a sixth year Guidance Meeting in September.
- Students attend Career Options and Open Days. In addition speakers from third level institutions, the Defence Forces and past pupils are invited to the school to speak to students.

To Support The Above Programme

- Weekly Junior Cycle Pastoral Care Meeting
- Weekly Senior Cycle Pastoral Care Meeting
- Guidance Counsellor and Chaplain Meetings
- Guidance Counsellor and SEN Co-ordinators Meeting

10. LINKS WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES, PERSONNEL AND POLICIES

- In Junior Cycle Guidance is an essential part of the Well Being Programme along with SPHE, CSPE and PE. Many aspects link to SPHE and PE at Senior Cycle.
- Guidance also overlaps with RE and the SEN Department.
- The Guidance Counsellor liaises with subject teachers. Teachers have a key role in providing students with information and expertise on the content and demands of their particular subject.

The following policies are relevant to guidance in St. Peter's:

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Child Protection
- Attendance
- Homework
- Special Educational Needs
- Critical Incident
- Substance Misuse
- SPHE
- RSE

11. DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS

- Re-introducing a Guidance Class in Fourth and Fifth Year in September 2018 with a structured programme for each year group.
- More access and support required from outside school to enable students' requests.
- Consideration of most suitable guidance resources (including online sites) and development of new guidance room.

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES in developing and implementing the policy:

Board of Management

It is their role to ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated on a regular basis.

Principal

It is the Principal's role to review the policy annually with the Guidance Counsellor and other appropriate teams/teachers.

Guidance Counsellor

- To ensure that all staff are informed and aware of the Whole School Guidance Policy.
- To implement and develop the plan.
- To review the plan with the appropriate members of staff.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Following consultation with all the parties this policy will be implemented.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- That all students will benefit and have access to appropriate guidance and counselling.
- That students with particular concerns have been helped to deal with these concerns.

- That students are encouraged and supported to remain in school until they have completed their Leaving Certificate.
- That all school leavers are satisfied with their leaving choices.

MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Guidance Counsellor will monitor the implementation of the policy in conjunction with the Principal and relevant staff. The principal will keep the Board of Management informed of same.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

This plan will be reviewed by the Guidance Counsellor on an annual basis. This review will take place at the end of the school year.