



WHOLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE PLAN

NEWPORT COLLEGE

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Newport College
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Rationale of Policy

Education Act, 1998 and Newport College's Mission Statement

This School Guidance Policy reflects the ethos and spirit of Newport College and it has been devised and developed in accordance with Section 9 of the Education Act 1998. Section 9(c) of that act 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." Section 9(d) elaborates further by stating that a school "shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students ... in consultation with their parents having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school."

The ethos and spirit of Newport College is embodied in the school's Mission Statement, which states Newport College Mission Statement

Definition of Guidance -What is Guidance and Counselling in schools?

Guidance and Counselling refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students in making choices about their lives and to help students in making transitions based on these choices. The Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act, 1998 identify Guidance and Counselling as a single process that "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 those choices." (Pages 4,5) These choices may be categorized into three distinct areas: (i) Personal and Social, (ii)Educational and (iii) Career. The Department of Education's guidelines state that "counselling in schools may include personal, educational, career counselling, or combinations of these."

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 three types of referrals.

- (a) Students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by an individual teacher, class tutor, by school management or through the student support team.
- (b) Student self-referral to the school Counsellor requesting one to one.
- (c) 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).

Background to Policy

A Consultative Process

This School Guidance Policy has evolved and developed from a consultative process involving staff, students, parents, and the Board of Management of Newport College. This policy is not rigid but rather it reflects the uniqueness of Newport College in its own particular context and circumstances.

The development of the “Whole school Guidance plan” has been guided by models of good practice in school guidance planning as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, the National Centre for Guidance in Education, and the School Development Planning Initiative.

Models of Good Practice

In the preparation for and review of this Whole School Guidance Plan, Newport College has been guided by the models of good practice in school guidance planning as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, the NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework, and Looking at our schools 2016: A quality Framework for Post Primary Schools. This policy has been developed within the parameters of the guidelines of the Department of Education and Science (Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to student's access to appropriate guidance, and Circular Letter No. PPT 12/05: Guidance Provision in Second-Level Schools). Moreover, this policy also reflects “Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines”

Newport College views this whole school policy and school guidance plan as a work in progress and all of the stakeholders to this plan are committed to reviewing and improving this policy on a regular basis.

Related School Policies

This Whole School Guidance Policy and Newport College’s Guidance Programme is consistent with and supported by a range of other School Policies:

Guidance Counsellor's Department Plan

Child Protection Policy: Child Safeguarding Statement Newport College

Code of Behavior- Anti-Bullying Policy

Substance Use Policy

SPHE/RSE Policy

Internet and Acceptable Use Policy

Attendance Policy

Data Protection Policy (link to Data Protection and Freedom of Information- TETB page)

Special Education Needs Policy

Leaving Cert Applied and Transition Year Policy

Complaints Procedure

Suspension Expulsion Policy

DEIS Plan

JCSP Policy

School Assessment Policy

Critical Incident Policy

School Admissions Policy

Linkages to other Programmes

Newport College acknowledges the relevance of and importance of SPHE and Religion to the social and personal development focus of Guidance and Counselling. A full description and account of both SPHE and Religion in Newport College is provided in their respective department plans. Newport College recognises the significant contribution that the Leaving Cert Vocational Programme, the Leaving Cert Applied and the Transition Year Programme make in providing students with appropriate and relevant Guidance-related activities. This Whole School Guidance Plan recognises the significance of trying all the option subjects in 1st Year and all other cross curricular links (for example Guidance and CSPE, Guidance and Communication/Work Experience Modules, Guidance and the TY Programme).

Objective of Policy

To ensure that the students of Newport College have access to guidance, that is appropriate to their needs, stage of development, and their school programme.

Aims of Policy

1. To promote the development and growth of each student on a personal, social, educational and career basis.

2. To ensure that guidance initiatives and programmes in Newport College are delivered in a developmental sequence that is relevant and appropriate to all students.
3. To provide a framework for the delivery of guidance programmes within our school and in a manner that takes account of the diverse and particular needs of students with special educational needs, students of all ability levels and students from different backgrounds and cultures.

Objectives and Activities

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 Senior 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 Guidance classes, 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. In third year, students will be made aware of the implications of subject choice on future career and educational options. Through L.C.V.P. work experience or L.C.A work experience we would hope that our students would experience the world of work and move towards the educational idea of becoming active citizens.

Activities (Senior Cycle)

- Students will have one guidance class per week in fifth year and Leaving Cert.
- 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 in the form of Mock Interviews.
- 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 college open days/information evenings.
- Students will be informed of upcoming events and subject to demand they will be accompanied to relevant open days and exhibitions.
- Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the GC, if necessary, to discuss any issues.
- Third year students entering senior cycle and their parents will be given a detailed information booklet 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, if necessary. They will have access to the computer room for career research where possible.
- The Guidance Counsellor will liaise as appropriate with NEPS.

Objectives (Junior Cycle)

- It is our intention that the Junior Guidance Programme would be instrumental in easing the transition to secondary school. We aim to ensure that personal or learning difficulties are detected as early as possible and to foster good habits of learning and study.
- 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.

Activities (Junior Cycle)

- Incoming students will be assessed on literacy, numeracy and reading skills through CAT tests.
- Incoming students will be inducted by the Principal, Deputy-Principal and Class Tutor.
- 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 the Guidance Counsellor to discuss pertinent issues relating to school/education matters/ subject choice.

Guidance Team

This Whole School Guidance Policy and the associated School Guidance Programmes reflect the ongoing contribution of the following individuals and groups:

Guidance Counsellor (A detailed account of the Role of the Guidance Counsellor's is provided in the Guidance Department's Subject Plan)

The Principal and Deputy Principal

The Learning Support team

The Programme Coordinators

The Home School Community Liaison Officer

Year heads and class tutors

The Religion Dept.

The PE Dept.

The SPHE Teachers

The CSPE Teachers

Subject Teachers

Special Needs Assistants

School Completion Programme Personnel

School Secretarial Staff

The Caretaker and all other Ancillary Staff

Whole School Guidance Activities

The Student 'Guidance' Team work together to provide the following formal guidance services during the school year: Assessment/Aptitude Testing of Students; School Induction and Orientation for Incoming First Years; Pre-Transition supports for new students; Study Skills Workshops; Information and Open Nights for Parents and Students; Extra-Curricular Activities; Home-School visits; Educational College Excursions; Work place visits; Visits by Guest Speakers; Visits to Careers Exhibitions and College Open Days; Engagement with student mental health programmes and support agencies. In addition to the above formal school guidance activities, guidance and support is provided informally and on a regular basis in a variety of contexts by all staff. There are a range of other student supports within the school including the students' council and the Board of Management.

Guidance Provision

Newport College is committed to employing a team approach in the provision of a range of learning experiences and developmental opportunities to all students. These experiences and opportunities, which will be appropriate and relevant to student needs, shall enable the growth and development of all students and shall assist students in making choices and transitions. (For example; Transitions from Primary to Secondary School, from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle, from School to Further Education and the World of Work).

A number of mechanisms are used in order to assist students in making choices. These include:

1. **Assessment:** The Guidance Counsellor, the Learning Support Co-Ordinator and other associated staff members carry out assessments such as the C.A.T 4 Level E and Level F, Career Interest Tests and other suitable testing instruments.
2. **Educational Skills:** Junior Cert. and Leaving Cert. students are given instruction on Study Skills and Examination Techniques in 3rd Year and 6th Year respectively. All junior and senior cycle students also attend study skills workshops.
3. Students are provided with information in 1st Year, 3rd Year and Transition Year that helps them to make decisions on subject choice, subject level and programme choice, which is appropriate to each student's aptitude and interests and which is cognisant of student's career aspirations. A Homework Club, which provides assistance to targeted junior cycle students is in operation. After School Study is available to students if they wish to avail of it.

4. Vocational Guidance Interviews: The Guidance Counsellor holds interviews with first year, third year and transition year to facilitate subject choice if necessary. Vocational guidance is also provided to Fifth Year and Sixth Year Students to assist them in identifying Third Level courses and career areas that correspond to their interests and aptitudes.
5. The Guidance Counsellor also meets with Leaving Cert Applied students to help them to formulate a Career Action Plan. We also use the School Business Partnership initiative to prepare students for interview and the world of work.
6. Counselling: Students are referred for counselling to the Guidance Counsellor by the Student Support Team, School Management, Parents and/or members of staff. A student may also self refer him/herself for counselling, which can assist students to explore their feelings and to cope with challenges and problems. Students can be referred to the HSCL Officer, the SCP team, year head and NEPS for support as required.
7. Information: Students are provided with information on external agencies and supports where necessary by all relevant staff.
8. Onward Referral Service: The individual student is referred, where it is deemed necessary by School Management/Guidance Counsellor/Student Support Team to external individuals/agencies. Examples include: General Practitioners, The HSE Mid-West Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Pieta House, The National Educational Psychological Service, psychologists.

Membership of the Student Support Team

The student support team meets every Wednesday and consists of the following members:

Ms. Clodagh Kelly	Principal
Mr. Tim Butler	Deputy Principal
Mr. Chris Keane	Guidance Counsellor
Mr. Timmy Fleming	Acting SEN Coordinator
Ms. Sinead McNamara	Home-School Liaison
Ms. Marie Tuohey	School Completion Programme

Whole School Guidance Programme

All years

- Meetings with student support team regarding counselling and guidance needs of individual students
- Meet and liaise with Learning Support regarding the needs of students
- Individual counselling and guidance available to a student experiencing personal difficulties or difficulties with study and decision making
- Information dissemination to students, parents and teachers
- Referrals to and from the Guidance Counsellor
- Assessment
- Visits to career exhibitions and open days
- Organisation of guest speakers

First Year Guidance Programme

- Prepare and administer entrance tests
- Introduction of role of guidance counsellor
- Discuss the subject choice systems in the school
- Liaise with SPHE teachers and class tutors 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
- Friends for Youth Programme
- Alert Programme
- Meet students individually in need of one-to-one personal, social or educational guidance and where necessary arrange referral to outside agency (through the S.S.T)
- Subject choice: the Guidance Counsellor makes students aware of the factors to take into account when choosing option subjects
- Meet parents by appointment
- SPHE programme: Belonging and Integrating, Self-Management, Communication Skills, Physical Health, Friendship, Relationships and Sexuality (RSE), Emotional Health, Influences and Decisions, Substance Use and Personal Safety

Second Year

- Liaise with management, teachers and student support team and tutors
- Individual counselling if required
- Meet parents by appointment
- Referral to outside agency if necessary

- SPHE programme: Belonging and Integrating, Self-Management, Communication Skills, Physical Health, Friendship, Relationships and Sexuality (RSE), Emotional Health, Influences and Decisions, Substance Use and Personal Safety

Third Year

- Liaise with management, teachers, tutors and student support team
- Individual counselling if required
- Meet parents by appointment
- Referral to outside agency if necessary
- Review study skills and exam technique
- Subject Choice for LCVP Leaving Cert, Established Leaving Cert and LCA as an option
- SPHE programme: Belonging and Integrating, Self-Management, Communication Skills, Physical Health, Friendship, Relationships and Sexuality (RSE), Emotional Health, Influences and Decisions, Substance Use and Personal Safety

Leaving Certificate Applied

- LCA students receive one guidance class per week
- They also have timetabled Social Education classes each week
- Guidance Counsellor is also available to meet parents
- All LCA students do 1 day of work experience each week

Fifth Years

- Timetabled class each week
- Individual counselling to help students make informed decisions about personal, educational and career issues. Some students require two or more sessions
- Oct: Attendance at University of Limerick and Limerick Institute of Technology Open Day. Students have the option of attending LIT Art College
- Presentations from Guest speakers from UL and LIT. (Possible presentations from Carlow IT, Mary Immaculate College and Teagasc depending on demand)
- All Students complete a career investigation
- Participation in the Reach+ guidance programme

Sixth Years

- Timetabled class each week
- Individual counselling to help students make informed decisions about personal, educational and career issues. Some students require two or more sessions
- Sept: Students attend the Mid-West Careers exhibition
- Oct: Attendance at University of Limerick and Limerick Institute of Technology Open Day. Students have the option of attending LIT Art College
- Presentations from Guest speakers from UL and LIT. (Possible presentations from Carlow IT, Mary Immaculate College and Teagasc depending on demand)
- Presentation and assistance with CAO, HEAR and DARE application forms

- Participation in the Reach+ guidance programme
- All students partake in a recorded interview and feedback is given

A detailed term by term account is included in the First to Sixth Year Schemes of work.

Resources and Supports:

Department of Education and Science Resources

Staff guidance provision within the general teaching allocation

School Funds as Resources allow

Career Guidance Office

Careers Library in Guidance office

Careers area on school website

Student Support team

School Completion team

Regular Meetings with school management team with their Guidance Counsellor and with other staff members (HSCL, Year-Heads, Class Teachers, Tutors, SNA's) and with parents/guardians

Links with the community and with other agencies and groups that support students and parents

Links with 3rd Level Colleges (Admissions, Access Officers, School Liaison Officers), SOLAS, Further Education and Training Boards.

Links with Business and Industry -Work Experience etc.

School Business Partnership

Transition year and LCA work-experience links

Monitoring of the Guidance Policy/Guidance Plan

The School Management, in consultation with the Guidance Counsellor and the School Guidance Team will monitor the implementation of the Guidance Policy and its associated Guidance Programmes.

Evaluation and Development of Guidance Policy

This School Guidance Policy will be subject to ongoing evaluation. We are committed to this through surveying parents, staff and students.

Newport College's evaluation of the policy will be guided by the following questions: Is the guidance plan working?

Are the guidance programmes being provided in the most effective manner? Are all students being provided with appropriate guidance?

What areas of the Guidance Plan/Guidance Policy require modification and improvement?

What are the areas that need to be developed in terms of guidance provision and programme delivery?

The guidance team and the school community more generally have an important role to play in the evolution and development of the Guidance Policy. Contributions and feedback are welcomed from the entire school community and from all other stakeholders in relation to Guidance Provision and Guidance Programmes.

Review

There will be a full review of the Guidance policy after a minimum of two years. The review will comprise representatives of all the stakeholders to the Guidance Policy/Guidance Plan. The review process will involve surveying students, parents, teachers and all other stakeholders to the Guidance Plan.

Priority Areas for Development

- Setting up a well-being committee
- Implementing Check and Connect
- Enhancing the new JCT wellbeing programme in the school
- Enhancing the supports available to students who present with more complex needs