



Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin Guidance Policy

1.1 Scope

Guidance refers to the service provided by Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin in the process of developing each student. These experiences help to develop student's self-management skills, which helps them to make informed decisions in their lives.

Counselling plays a central role in the school's Guidance Programme. It is available throughout the process of learning development, during times of crisis, for personal counselling, educational counselling and career guidance.

The Board of Management, school management, the pastoral care team, the learning-support team, the career guidance team, and other teachers in the school have a central role in this Guidance Policy, as it effects the whole school. Emphasis is placed on the pastoral care of our students, and their personal, social and intellectual development in school.

1.2 Rationale

This policy applies to students, parents, and staff of Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin. This Guidance Policy describes the Guidance Programme in the school and how the guidance needs of our students are met. This policy is based on the Education Act, 1998, the National Guidelines on Guidance, and the NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines for Junior Cycle also. The Guidance Policy is viewed as a whole-school document, and all members of the school community have a role in its application.

1.3 Links to School Ethos

It is the aim of Gaelcholaiste Charraig Uí Leighin to create and develop a welcoming, safe and orderly environment, where every support is given to each pupil to fulfil their personal, social and moral potential, while learning to respect themselves and all others.

The school will use various strategies to facilitate these learning opportunities, and to support and guide each pupil to fulfil their potential.

1.4 Context

This policy should be read in the context of the school's three guiding principles, respect, fairness and integrity, as well as the Code of Behaviour, the Health and Safety Policy, the Child Protection Policy, the Critical Incident Policy, the Pastoral Care Policy, the Wellbeing Policy and the Anti- Bullying Policy, as well as Cork ETB's Data Protection Policy.

1.5 Aims

It is the aim of this policy to;

- a) Help students to recognise their own interests and strengths;
- b) Enable students to be more independent and responsible for their own decisions;
- c) Help students to recognise the possibilities available to them;
- d) Support students to make choices and decisions throughout their lives;
- e) Empower students to make personal, educational and career choices for themselves;
- f) Enable students to cope with everyday problems now and in the future;
- g) Help students to achieve the wellbeing indicators of Junior Cycle;
- h) Have self-confident, active citizens with leadership skills graduating from the school.

2. The Guidance Team

2.1 Guidance Counselling

First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Years have one period of Guidance per week. Fourth Years have two periods of ePortfolio also.

2.2 Junior Classes

First Years are timetabled for one period a week of Guidance with the School Counsellor, under the wellbeing units of learning. Every effort is also made to ensure that the Year Head and Class Tutors are timetabled for Wellbeing classes with their classes during the week.

2.3 Special Educational Needs

The SEN team and the SEN Co-Ordinator work with those that may need extra help. An Individual Learning Plan for these students describes the work being done with each of these students.

2.4 The Pastoral Team

The Pastoral Care team consists of Year Heads, Class Tutors, the Deputy Principal, the Principal, the Guidance Counsellor and the SEN Co-Ordinator. Weekly meetings are held to discuss issues relevant to the Pastoral Care team.

2.5 Year Heads

The Year Head meets with their Year Group at Assembly each Monday. The Year Head has an extremely important role in the provision of Pastoral Care and is the main point of contact for the students and parents/guardians at all times.

2.6 Class Tutors

The Class Tutor has an extremely important role in the provision of Pastoral Care. Please refer to the Pastoral Care Policy for further information.

2.7 School Staff

Guidance applies to all staff members of Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí leighin. Great emphasis is placed on Pastoral Care in the school. Staff members are encouraged to be understanding and aware of each pupil of the school. Information about pupils is shared with staff members when necessary, and always with discretion. Every support is given to staff and students to help them deal with others personal problems, where relevant.

2.8 Assembly

Every student attends Morning Assembly once a week. Assembly begins at 08:35 and lasts ten minutes. Each Year Group has their own Assembly. It gives an opportunity to the Class Tutor, the Year Head, and School Management to speak to the students. It also gives an opportunity to students to address their peers.

2.8 The Student Council

Each Class Group has two representatives on the Student Council, one male and one female. One teacher is responsible for helping with the organisation of the Student Council. The Student Council arrange various activities throughout the year. They participate in policy review and bring student voice to the forefront in the school.

3. Confidentiality

- a) Confidentiality is a central part of the counselling process. Information shared during counselling sessions is shared in confidence.
- b) It is necessary to explain to each student that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed always. In any circumstance involving Child Protection concerns, the information must be shared with the Designated Liaison Person in the school. Any such case shall be dealt with in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

4. Guidance Programme

First Year

- a) School Management and the SEN Co-Ordinator contact the Primary Schools prior to students commencing in Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin. Information is sought regarding those that may need extra supports.
- b) The Primary Schools share Educational Passports of those enrolling in First Year at the end of the previous academic year. Relevant information on each student's learning is available on these Passports.
- c) An Information Night for Parents of Incoming First-Years is held in the Spring prior to commencing in the school. Information on the curriculum, the school and all other arrangements are shared with parents at this event. Particular emphasis is placed on the Option Subjects, to ensure that parents have a clear understanding of what is involved with our Taster Programme.
- d) A CAT4 Educational Assessment is held in the first week of the school year. This assessment gives further information on student ability levels and the learner-type of each student.
- e) First Year students return to school for an Induction Programme prior to any other year group. During Induction, iPads and lockers are distributed, and all information relevant to school arrangements are discussed.
- f) Student Personal Information is filtered on VS Ware. The Year Head monitors each First-Year student's attendance and each student's journal. In this way, student progress is monitored. This helps to identify any issues with students at an early stage.
- g) Each First-Year class has two SPHE classes per week. Social and Personal aspects of teenage life, bullying, friendships, social media, etc. are focussed on. Each First Year

class has one period of Guidance per week, covering wellbeing, life-skills, transitions, resilience and careers.

- h) A mentoring programme between First and Transition Years is used to help First Years familiarise themselves with students from another year group.
- i) A Study Skills workshop with Student Enrichment is held early in the school year to help students develop their study skills and self-organisation.
- j) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents.

Second Year

- a) Support is available to those in Second Year from their Year Head, Class Tutor, , Subject Teachers, the SEN team, School Management and the Guidance Counsellor.
- b) Second Years have the same Class Tutor as they had in First Year. The Tutor has the same duties and responsibilities as they did in First Year.
- c) As far as is possible with the timetable, the Class Tutor is the SPHE teacher in Second Year.
- d) A WRAT 5 assessment is performed on Second Year students to determine those who may be eligible for Reasonable Accommodations in the State Examinations.
- e) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents.

Third Year

- a) A Study Skills workshop is organised early in this academic year. Guidance is given on how to create a study timetable and how to prepare for House and State Exams.
- b) The structure, assessment and grading of subjects is discussed in the SPHE class, and a record of Other Learning Experiences is updated on the student's Drive account in this class also.
- c) Each Class Group will have the same Class Tutor from First to Third Year, giving everyone a good chance of getting to know each other better.
- d) The Class Tutor has a Pastoral Care role, and he/she look after the students in their class group, they check their journals on a weekly basis, they are available to discuss problems with the students, and give any other support they can.

- e) The school Counsellor meets with students individually on a need to basis.
- f) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents. A Counsellor Requisition Form should be completed should a child need to arrange a meeting with the school counsellor. Only Class Tutors or School Management can do this.

Transition Year

- a) Transition Years have one class of Guidance per week. Websites, prospectus, work experience journals and eportfolios are used during this class.
- b) Transition Years have two classes per week of ePortfolio. This helps students to record their learning experiences throughout the year. Work on cv's also takes place in this class.
- c) Each student completes two weeks of Work Experience, and likewise with Voluntary Work. A Cat 4 Level G Careers Assessment is also completed during Transition Year.
- d) Guest speakers are invited from the various colleges, training centres and industrial centres in the locality to speak to the students with regards to the various opportunities available to them.
- e) An information evening for parents is held in the spring of Transition Year to discuss Senior Cycle Option Subjects.
- f) Transition Years follow the theme of 'Careers' for the period from Christmas to February Mid-Term. A lot of time is spent during this period discussing subject choice, senior cycle subjects, assessment and subject syllabi.
- g) The Class Tutor has a Pastoral Care role, and he/she look after the students in their class group, they check their journals on a weekly basis, they are available to discuss problems with the students, and give any other support they can.
- h) The school Counsellor meets with students individually on a need to basis.
- i) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents. A Counsellor Requisition Form should be completed should a child need to arrange a meeting with the school counsellor. Only Class Tutors or School Management can do this.

Fifth Year

- a) Fifth Years have one Career Guidance class per week. Websites, prospecti, research into daily lives of various professions, and the CAO form are all part of student learning throughout the year.
- b) Research is conducted into courses and opportunities relevant to the courses and careers of interest to them.
- c) Students also work on developing their cv's and how to apply for part-time jobs.
- d) Students are informed about Open days in various colleges in fifth year and are encouraged to attend same.
- e) Each class has the same Class Tutor in Fifth and Sixth Year, giving everyone a good chance of getting to know each other better.
- f) The Class Tutor has a Pastoral Care role, and he/she look after the students in their class group, they check their journals on a weekly basis, they are available to discuss problems with the students, and give any other support they can.
- g) Any difficulties are identified as early as possible through a weekly meeting between Class Tutors, the SEN team, the school Guidance Counsellor and School Management.
- h) The SEN team attend to those students who may be entitled to RACE Accommodations for the State Examinations through performing WRAT 5 tests and other literacy tests in Irish and English recommended by NEPS.
- i) The school counsellor meets with Fifth Year students on a need to basis.
- j) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents. A Counsellor Requisition Form should be completed should a child need to arrange a meeting with the school counsellor. Only Class Tutors or School Management can do this.

Sixth Year

- a) Previous learnings on the CAO, UCAS, scholarships, SUSI, Apprenticeship Courses, etc. are reviewed at the beginning of the school year.
- b) Students are encouraged to attend Open Days of the Colleges they may be interested in attending.

- c) Each class shall have the same Class Tutor, as far as is possible, in Fifth and Sixth Year, allowing everyone to get to know each other well.
- d) The Class Tutor gives every support to the students. The Class Tutor has a pastoral care role, and he/she looks after each student, checks journals on a weekly basis, they are available to discuss issues with the students, and they give any further supports possible.
- e) Any potential issues are identified as early as possible through weekly pastoral care meetings between Year Heads, Class Tutors, the SEN Co-Ordinator, the Guidance Counsellor and School Management.
- f) The Guidance Counsellor meets with students on a one-to-one basis as needs be.
- g) Students may be recommended to seek further supports from external organisations and/or professionals or to NEPS psychologists as appropriate, once agreed with parents. A Counsellor Requisition Form should be completed should a child need to arrange a meeting with the school counsellor. Only Class Tutors or School Management can do this.
- h) Continuous assessment takes place in 6th Year and results are monitored to identify any difficulties.
- i) The SEN Co-Ordinator manages RACE applications for Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations with the WRAT 5 test and other assessments recommended by NEPS early in 6th Year.
- j) The Guidance Counsellor is available during the Leaving Cert results to answer any questions and assist with any problems.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as necessary.

The Board of Management adopted this policy on March 19th, 2024.