

CBS Thurles Whole School Guidance Policy



CBS THURLES

Mission Statement

Thurles CBS is a place of learning where students are prepared for adult life, academically, emotionally, spiritually and culturally.

We strive for a safe environment, free from bullying. We aim to promote the Christian values inspired by the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice.

We seek to create an atmosphere of respect for the needs and talents of all members of our school community, while challenging all to reach their full potential'.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Thurles seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership

Mission / Value Statement

An effective Whole School Guidance Plan helps to build a Christian, caring community. Each person is respected as an individual with similarities and differences to others. We endeavour to provide a safe environment at CBS Thurles where the needs of students are identified and every effort is made by staff and by the school to meet these needs.

Everybody has talents and skills and we assist students in identifying these and making effective use of them. Each student in the school is encouraged to fulfil his potential. We recognise that our student population comes from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds and every effort is made to give them a sense of belonging in the school. The holistic development of each student in our care is of the utmost importance. We will endeavour to create an enjoyable environment where students and staff are proud to be associated with our school.

Our School

Our school is an all-boys voluntary secondary day school with a current enrolment of 680 students. The school dates back to 1816.

The enrolment is a mix of rural and urban children from different socio-economic backgrounds with a wide range of academic abilities. There are 42 permanent teaching staff with a further 4 teachers working in a part-time or temporary capacity. About 85% of students go on to further education and the others go straight to the workplace.

Definition

Guidance is defined as the process of facilitating individuals or groups at any point throughout their lives to develop their capacity for the self-management of their personal, social, educational, training, occupational and life choices in order to grow towards their potential and thereby to contribute to the development of a better society.

Overall Aims of the Guidance Programme

Educational

- To help achieve the ideals of the school's Mission Statement.
- To encourage students to participate fully in school and to maximise the educational opportunities and resources available to them.
- To help students identify their most effective learning style and develop appropriate study and exam skills.
- To help students make effective choices and to cope with the demands that school and

society places on them.

- To promote inclusion of special needs students, racial, ethnic and intellectual differences.

Vocational

- To promote career education as part of the overall educational programme on offer.
- To provide objective assessment student aptitudes and interests and provide feedback on these.
- To help each student realise his talents and abilities.
- To identify the areas of work that are related to these talents, aptitudes and abilities.
- To help students in their exploration of career progression routes and lifelong learning opportunities.
- To provide clear information on subject choice.
- To outline to students the implications of subject choice in terms of further education training and career options.
- To develop information-seeking skills for career exploration and planning, using Internet and other ICT.

Personal Development

- To help each student to develop to his full potential, emotionally, spiritually, physically and socially.
- To encourage the development of a positive self-image.
- To encourage a confident and caring person.
- To promote the development of appropriate skills in interacting with others and in dealing with the problems they may encounter.
- To encourage participation and involvement in the school as a community and to contribute to life in the wider community.

The following curricular programmes address guidance in the school.

- SPHE
- CSPE
- RSE
- TYO
- LCVP

Wellbeing is the responsibility of the whole school community and all teachers will the implement the pillars of the Wellbeing programme which will be incorporated into the Guidance Programme. The Wellbeing programme is currently under review.

Whole School Involvement

Guidance in the CBS is a whole school activity where members of staff have important and worthwhile contributions to make to the planning and delivery of many aspects of the programme. SPHE teachers will delivery many aspects of the programme in Junior Cycle.

Personnel involved in the Provision of Guidance

- Guidance Counsellor
- Principal
- Deputy Principals

- Year Heads
 - Class Tutors
 - SEN Team
 - R.E. Teachers
 - SPHE Teachers
- **Class Tutors:** Tutors will provide a pastoral care role during the year for their class grouping.
 - **SPHE / RE Teachers:** SPHE and Religion teachers, as part of their curriculum, provide aspects of the Guidance Programme to Junior students.
 - **Student Support Team:** The SST meet once a month and discuss the support needs required in the school and the effectiveness of these supports. The team also discuss the needs of individual students and can place, in consultation with management, support structures in place for these students. The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the SST.
 - **“One Good Adult” Programme:** All teachers act as the “One Good Adult” for 2/3 sixth year students to support and encourage students during their final year in the school.

The Specific Responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor

The following section describes the roles that are specific to the Guidance Counsellor (GC) of CBS Thurles.

- **Counselling**
The GC draws on his skills and experience, to help pupils in their decision-making, problem- solving and behaviour. Counselling is offered on an individual or small group basis. The focus of counselling may be on personal, educational and career issues, individually or in combination. The GC also provides a caring context for counselling young people in personal crisis.
- **Consultation**
The GC engages with parents, teachers, school management and referral agencies. Consultation may include interventions by the GC on behalf of a student.
- **Assessment**
The GC uses a range of psychological tests for prediction of academic performance, categorisation of occupational interests, assessment of behaviour, educational and career planning, personal and social development. Information from these tests is supplemented other records on the student that are held in the school. State examination results (Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate) and Mock Examination results enable the GC to assist a pupil in decision-making.
- **Information**
The GC helps students to identify sources of relevant information to assist them in decision- making.
- **Classroom Guidance Activities**
Classroom guidance activities fall into two main categories:
 1. Skills development to assist decision-making, CV preparation & job search, Career investigations, interviews, subject choice for 2nd and 5th year

preparation for work placements and study skills.

2. Information giving e.g. understanding CAO, the points system, the national qualifications framework, education, training and employment, opportunity awareness and pathways and UCAS systems.

Counselling Aims

All students will have access to individual or group counselling, on request or by referral. Counselling will focus on the domains of educational, personal/ social and career growth and development. Our service will try to balance prevention (developmental) counselling and intervention counselling. Counselling is most effective when integrated into a school climate, which encourages respect, trust, caring consideration and support for all- a climate that we believe exists in our school and is underpinned by the ethos and philosophy of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST), our trustees. Special consideration must be given to students with special needs or different cultural backgrounds.

The GC is an advocate for the student and he will provide a caring environment for young people in crisis.

In summary, we aim to:

1. To encourage responsible and rational behaviour in all our students.
2. To assist students in their decision-making.
3. To develop coping skills in our students.
4. To help our students to become responsible members of society.

Open Days

Purpose: They give students the opportunity to view the college campus and facilities and to get first hand information on the courses of interest to them. Students need to be selective in the Open Days they attend to avoid time wasting and avoid missing classes. Preparation is most important in order to get maximum benefit from the Open Day. Students need to be focused on what careers they are interested in and the relevant college courses available. Students are advised to study college prospectus in advance and prepare a number of questions. Students must wear full school uniform and obey the Code of Conduct while on such trips. The G.C. will organize transport where appropriate.

The LCVP Coordinator will liaise with the GC to organise a 3rd Level Careers Expo in the school in October each year to complement visits to 3rd level colleges. All senior students attend the expo.

Information Nights for Parents on Subject Choice and Career Options

- In March each year a meeting is organised for parents of 3rd Years and Transition Year students to familiarise them on the subject options and curricular programmes available to their sons. The guidance counsellor and the coordinators of TYO and LCVP provide input. Simultaneously, the options are discussed with the students during school time.
- In December each year a meeting is held for 1st year parents to familiarise them on the option subject choice for the Junior Cycle. The guidance counsellor and

subject teachers provide input.

- In December each year a meeting is held for all 6th year parents on the CAO process.

Guidance offered to Student Groups

First Years

The Year Head and Guidance Counsellor will interview all First Years after 6 – 8 weeks and identify needs, offer advice on subject choice after sampling optional subjects.

All students needing resource hours using the continuum of support will be identified by the SEN coordinator in June of the year of entry. The Guidance Counsellor will visit all classes during the year.

Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT), Subject Teacher (ST) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Coping with the transition from primary to secondary school. (GC, SPHE, CT)
- CATT assessments (SEN, ST)
- Making friends. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Identifying support structures in the school and the community. (GC, SPHE, SEN)
- Anti-bullying. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Study skills and homework. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- School rules and discipline. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Subject choice. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)

Second Years

The Year Head and Class Teachers arrange a means of regular contact with students to offer advice on discipline and coping with school. Information and advice will also be offered on subject levels, dropping to Ordinary or Foundation levels etc. The Guidance Counsellor will visit all classes during the year. Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT)) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Study and motivation, including study skills. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Self-discipline and time management. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Interpersonal relationships. (GC, SPHE, CT,ST)
- Decision-making skills. (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- The world of work. (GC, SPHE, CT)

Third Years

The Guidance Counsellor will visit all classes during the year. Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT), Subject Teacher (ST) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Study Skills and Exam Technique (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Career Interest Inventory (GC, SPHE, CT)
- Differential Aptitude Tests (GC, SEN)
- Information and advice on subject levels, dropping to Ordinary or Foundation levels (GC, SPHE, CT)
- Subject Choice: (GC, SPHE, ST)
- Information Night for Parents re 5th Senior Cycle Subject Options (GC, ST)
- Information Night on T.Y.O. and L.C.V.P. (GC,)

Transition Year

The coordinator of Transition Year organises work experience for TY students. Preparation for the world of work and the subsequent briefing and debriefing is also carried out by the TY Coordinator. The Guidance Counsellor will visit all classes during the year. Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT), Subject Teacher (ST) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Research and career investigation (GC, CT, ST)
- Study Skills and Exam Technique (GC, SPHE, CT, ST)
- Career Interest Inventory (GC, SPHE, CT)
- Differential Aptitude Tests (GC, SEN)
- Information and advice on subject options in Transition Year (GC, SPHE, CT)
- Information Night for TY Parents re 5th Senior Cycle Subject Options (GC, ST)
- Differential Aptitude Tests (GC, SEN)
- Group Project activities (ST)

Fifth Years

Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT), Subject Teacher (ST) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Study Skills (GC, CT, ST)
- Subject Levels: Higher/Ordinary (GC, CT, ST)
- Emphasis on career investigations (GC, CT, ST)
- CV preparation and application forms. (GC, CT, ST)
- Use of Internet and online portals/websites (GC, CT, ST)
- H-PAT Ireland awareness (GC)
- Qualifax (GC, CT, ST)
- Work Experience
- Meet students individually (GC)
- Open Days (UCD, I.T. Carlow & Waterford, U.L) (GC)

Sixth Years

Our “*One Good Adult Programme*” allows for all teachers to meet with 2/3 sixth year students during the year to encourage and support students. The Guidance Counsellor will visit all classes during the year to provide guidance on career choice, CAO and college career. All students are meet individually before the completion of the CAO process. Areas of importance that are dealt with by the Guidance Counsellor (GC), SPHE teachers (SPHE), Class Tutors (CT), Subject Teacher (ST) and SEN Coordinator are:

- Levels: Higher V. Ordinary (GC, CT, ST)
- Meet individually (GC)
- Programme: How to plan, Interest Inventory, Aptitude tests, etc (GC, CT, ST)
- CAO application system (GC)
- UCAS applications (GC)
- Open Days (GC)
- Attend Open Days
- PLC courses (GC)
- Higher options Conference at RDS
- Talk to Parents re Options, Third Level, CAO etc. (GC)

Summary of Services

The services provided by the Guidance Counsellor can be summarised as follows:

- Individual counselling to all students on request or by referral.
- Class guidance module for Transition year students in preparation for senior cycle and subject choice.
- Guidance modules for First Year, Second Year and Third Year classes covering topics such as study skills, and bullying (In consultation with the SPHE Department and Year Heads).
- Psychometric testing: Differential Aptitude Tests.
- First Year Induction Program and Mentor System
- Classroom Guidance for 5th and 6th Year students to assist them with career choice e.g.: CAO, Colleges of Further Education, Apprenticeships, Defence Forces etc.
- Individual Guidance meetings for 6th Year students to assist them with career choice, CAO choice, HEAR/DARE applications, UCAS application etc.
- Attendance at organised Open Days e.g.; Higher Options • Guest Speakers e.g. Higher Education Institutions, Colleges of Further Education, Various careers, FAS
- Parents' Information Evenings on: • Subject Choice (Third Year & Transition Year)
- Open Evening (Incoming First Years)
- CAO/UCAS/FETAC Info night (Sixth Years)

This policy was passed by the Board in June 2018 and will be reviewed every 2 years.

Approval

This policy has been approved by CBS Thurles Board of Management.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management