



**Saint Brendan's College, Belmullet, Co. Mayo**  
**Whole School Guidance and Counselling Plan**

<b>Date passed by BOM</b>	<b>02-02-16</b>
<b>Review date.</b>	<b>Feb 2018</b>
<b>Signature Of Chairperson.</b>	<b>Teresa McGuire</b>
<b>Signature of BOM member.</b>	<b>Michael Hurst</b>



**St. Brendan's College**  
**Belmullet**  
**Co. Mayo**



## **Whole School Guidance and Counselling Plan**

### **Scope of Policy:**

This policy applies to all students, their parents, staff and Board of Management.

### **Rationale:**

Schools are required in accordance with the Education Act (1998) to 'ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance' (Section 9c), with the consequence that guidance is an integral part of a school's curricular activities.

The Act also requires schools to develop a school plan based on the needs of the school.

This policy having due regard for the education Act 1998 sets down how guidance is regarded as a core element of this school's curriculum.

### **Mission Statement:**

*St. Brendan's College is committed to providing the highest educational standards and facilities for our students. We aim to build a partnership between all those involved in the provision of a top quality service – Mayo Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board, School Management, teachers, parents and pupils. This will enable our students to reach their full potential and prepare them for participation as good citizens in society.*



*We see the community of staff and students of St. Brendan's College striving to attain the highest possible standards in education, social integration, extra-curricular activities and sport. We will do so in the working context of a gathering of like-minded individuals who deeply respect each other and each other's needs, likes, dislikes and preferences. St. Brendan's College will be a school where each student and staff member will have the right to be: with no fear of bullying, discrimination, intimidation or invasion of personal privacy. The staff and students of St. Brendan's College will inhabit a happy school.*

The Guidance and Counselling Plan draws its inspiration from and is guided by the Mission Statement. It endeavours to provide a range of learning experiences designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions in accordance with those choices. These choices may be categorised into three separate but interlinked areas:

- Personal & Social
- Educational
- Career

It aspires to facilitate the maturation process of the students and to build their self-esteem and self-worth in a way that will encourage them to embrace the opportunities that their futures will present. It does this in partnership with the staff, the students, the parents and guardians as well as members of the local community, work providers and statutory bodies. The Guidance and Counselling Programme is supported by the entire staff and they are vigilant and alert to the needs of students they encounter and who are well positioned to provide information and assistance to those students who require it.



## The Aims of the Guidance Programme

- Help students explore their thoughts and feelings and the choices open to them in the various aspects of their lives.
- Give care and support to students learning to cope with specific difficulties and those learning to cope with the many aspects of growing up.
- Provide various types of psychometric tests and interest inventories to assist students to obtain a better self-understanding.
- Provide factual information on education and training opportunities, occupation and labour market trends and to assist students in the transition to further and higher education, training and employment.
- Provide individual students with advice and directions in the personal, social, education and career areas.
- Assist students in choosing their subjects and to develop study skills and exam techniques.
- Co-operate with the SPHE teachers in the delivery of knowledge and skills relating to the personal and social development, self-awareness, decision making and planning of students
- Refer students if necessary to outside services such as GP's and NEPS
- Facilitate the referral of individual students to the Guidance Counsellor by teachers, Board of Management, school management, and parents while respecting the voluntary participation of the referred student
- Provide an Induction Programme for incoming first year pupils and to assist their transition from primary to secondary school



- Facilitate students to experience the world of work in a meaningful and structured way in conjunction with parents, relevant programme coordinators and work providers
- Track the progression of past pupils so that current pupils can benefit from their knowledge and experience of further and higher education, training and employment
- Be available by appointment to parents who wish to discuss issues arising for individual pupils
- Establish links with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance the provision of guidance for the pupils
- Be available to Leaving Certificate students and parents on Leaving Certificate Results Day and CAO Offers Day.
- Be contactable by Leaving Certificate students and parents with regard to CAO offers, HEAR offers, DARE offers, UCAS offers etc. once offers are made by the aforementioned establishments.

## Guidance Counsellor

Ms. B Padden

## Number of Guidance Hours

Total number of students in school:

Total number of hours:

## Allocation of time by Guidance Counsellor

Year Group	Class Allocation
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Intermittent: at beginning of school year
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	No class contact
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	No class contact



Transition Year	1 class per week per week per class group Individual appointments
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	1 class per week per class group Individual appointments
6 <sup>th</sup> Year	1 class per week per class group Individual appointments

### The Role of the Guidance Counsellor

Guidance counsellors are professionally trained to undertake the following tasks within the school guidance programme:

- **Counselling:** empowering students to make decisions, solve problems, change behaviour and resolve issues in their lives. Such activity may be personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling, or it may involve combinations of each. 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.
- **Support:** The guidance counsellor provides support to parents, teachers, the school principal, Board of Management and referral agencies in assisting the personal and social, career and educational development of students.
- **Assessment:** The guidance counsellor is trained to use a range of psychometric tests and other evaluative instruments to support relevant objectives of the school guidance programme. Such objectives may be related to career and educational planning, personal decision making and development of self-awareness.
- **Information:** Assisting students to acquire interpret and use information relevant to their personal and social, educational and career development.
- **Classroom Guidance Activities:** Providing classroom based learning experiences that are relevant to the objectives of the school guidance programme. Such experiences may include information giving, information and communication technologies (ICT), skills development (e.g. planning, decision-making, study skills, communication, values clarification), and vocational preparation.



- **Planning and Organising Workplace Learning:** Schools need to make provision for work based or work simulation learning experiences relevant to the personal and social, educational and career learning objectives of the school guidance programme. Such experiences include work experience, work shadowing, visits to workplaces, training centres and higher education institutes etc.
- **Referrals:** Seeking for students the assistance of non-school based professionals e.g. NEPS, following standard procedures. The guidance counsellor also provides support for students referred to him/her by teachers, parents, and school management.
- **Professional Development:** The guidance counsellor should keep abreast of on-going changes in the fields of training, education, work, and child welfare. The School management should facilitate the attendance of the guidance counsellor at relevant events and at in-career professional training during the school year. Participation in these events should be related to the objectives of the school guidance programme. Attendance at non-school based events should be negotiated / agreed in advance between the School management and the guidance counsellor.

## **Guidance Curriculum**

The Guidance curriculum is divided into two components:

1. Formal Guidance
2. Informal Guidance



## Formal Guidance

The Formal Guidance curriculum is delivered using two forms of intervention employing a number of methodologies:

1. Individual contact of a personal counselling nature and careers/vocational guidance.
2. Classroom guidance delivered in regular weekly classes

## Informal Guidance

The Informal Guidance programme consists of liaising with other teaching staff, school management, parents and local service providers to promote cross curricular links and to enhance the development of a whole school policy in relation to the delivery of The Guidance and Counselling Plan. Meeting with parents/guardians form an integral part of informal guidance as do career events and information nights.

## Grouping of students

Students participate in the Guidance programme within their class group. Class groupings are organised on a streamed basis in Junior Cycle. In Senior Cycle, they are streamed but they are also banded which allows students to access their core subjects at an appropriate level.

## Range and Variety of Resources

- Board of Management and Principal.
- Guidance counsellor.
- Subject teachers and the learning support teacher(s).
- Staff with formal roles (year head, class tutor, etc.).
- In-school programme support teams.
- Parents.
- Students.
- Classroom.
- Computer facilities
- Community (workplace, referral, etc.).
- The Department of Education and Science, agencies such as the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE).
- Professional bodies and associations such as the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), teacher unions and management bodies.





- The School Development Planning Initiative and other national initiatives' support teams.
- ICT, video and printed national resources.
- Test materials.

## **Provision of Health and Safety Requirements**

This section of the plan may be subdivided

- Administration
- Policies

### **Administration**

To ensure the safe and effective delivery of guidance programmes an Appointments System for Personal counselling/Careers/Vocational Guidance – Interviews operate. Appointments are made with the Guidance Counsellor and the student is given an appointment indicating the time and date of the appointment. They must show this to the teacher whose class they are leaving. The class teacher has the right to refuse a student to leave for an appointment due to a test or to essential work being done in that class. If a teacher refuses, the appointment is then rescheduled. The onus is placed on the student to swap their allocated time with another student for a more appropriate time and date.

Attendance sheets / Permission Slips are used for career talks/presentation or external trips. The Guidance Counsellor will take names for talks etc. and this list is photocopied and placed on the notice board in the staff room. The original copy is used to take a roll call at the beginning of the presentation by the Guidance Counsellor.

### **Policies:**

- Confidentiality Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy / Care Team Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- School Trips Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- S.E.N Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- S.P.H.E / R.S.E / R.E
- I.T and Information Provision



These policies are contained in the appendix

## Guidance and Counselling Plan

### 1<sup>st</sup> Year

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for first year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with the RE, SPHE and individual class teachers. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and the proactive engagement of parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Education areas are: Transition from primary to secondary school, making new friends, bullying, substance misuse and healthy eating. In the area of Education Guidance, the identification of the educational needs of first year students is dealt with while in the Career Guidance area, the topics covered are: subject choice and subject skills.

These topics have been identified by the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group and the general staff as the most important topics in the Guidance and Counselling Plan for first year students. The following page presents a details overview of how each topic is explored and delivered in various setting and by various individuals.

Number of weekly timetable classes: Guidance: 0

SPHE: 1

C.S.P.E: 1

RE: 1



## **1<sup>ST</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan**

### **Personal and Social Education**

#### **Transition from primary to secondary school;**

- Visit to primary schools
- School Prospectus
- Transition Day in February
- Orientation Programme / Summer Camp
- Mentoring Programme / Big Brother Big Sister
- Individual staff meetings for first year parents
- Individual Year Head and Tutors
- Home – School Liaison Officer
- Project Worker

#### **Making New Friends**

- Transition Day in February
- Orientation Programme / Summer Camp (July)
- Mentoring Programme
- SPHE Programme
- Individual meetings for all 1<sup>st</sup> years
- Information Night for parents

#### **Anti - Bullying**

- Transition Day
- Orientation Programme (July)



- Mentoring Programme
- RE Programme Individual class teachers
- Individual meetings

### **Substance Misuse**

- SPHE Programme
- Invited Speakers

### **Healthy Eating**

- SPHE Programme
- Invited Speakers

## **Educational Guidance**

### **Identification of educational needs**

- Induction Day
- Specific diagnostic tests
- Special needs department / co-ordinator
- Information from primary schools
- Information from parents / guardians

## **Careers Education**

### **Study Skills**

- Study skills programme
- Individual class teachers

### **Subject Choice**

- Information Pack
- Information Night for parents and students
- Individual appointments



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for second year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with the RE, SPHE and individual class teachers. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and the proactive engagement of parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Educational areas are: positive mental health, decision making, relationships and sexuality, bullying, substance misuse and healthy eating. In the area of Educational Guidance there are no specific topics covered while in the Career Guidance area, the topics covered are: goal setting, motivation and study skills.

These topics have been identified by the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group and the general staff as the most important topics in the Guidance and Counselling Plan for second year students. The following page presents a details overview of how each topic is explored and delivered in various settings and by various individuals.

The Study Skills Programme is similar to the programme for first year and is therefore contained in the appendix.

Number of weekly timetabled classes:

Guidance: 0



SPHE: 1

CSPE: 1

R.E: 1

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

### Personal and Social Education

#### Anti -Bullying

SPHE Programme  
CSPE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor one to one  
Anti-Bullying Awareness Week  
Invited Speaker/Drama

#### Positive Mental Health

SPHE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor one to one  
Positive Mental Health Week



Invited speakers

**Substance Misuse**

SPHE Programme

Guidance Counsellor one to one

Invited speakers

**Decision Making**

SPHE Programme

CSPE Programme

Guidance Counsellor one to one

**Healthy Eating**

SPHE Programme

CSPE Programme

Guidance Counsellor one to one

**Relationships and Sexuality**

SPHE Programme

CSPE Programme

RSE Programme

Guidance Counsellor one to one

**Educational Guidance & Careers Education**

**Goal Setting**

SPHE Programme Guidance

Counsellor one to one

**Motivation**

SPHE Programme

**Study Skills**

Study Skills Programme

SPHE Programme



## 3rd Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for third year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with the RE, SPHE and individual class teachers. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and the





proactive engagement of parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Education areas are: positive mental health, relationships and sexuality, healthy peer relationships, health and safety, substance misuse, stress and exam pressure.

These topics have been identified by the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group and the general staff as the most important topics in the Guidance and Counselling Plan for third year students. The following page presents a detailed overview of how each topic is explored and delivered in various settings and by various individuals.

Number of weekly timetabled classes:	Guidance:	0	(Intermittent)
	SPHE	1	
	CSPE	1	
	R.E	1	

## 3rd Year Guidance and Counselling Plan



## Personal and Social Education

### Positive Mental Health

SPHE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor 1 to 1  
Positive Mental Health Awareness Week  
Invited speakers

### Substance Misuse

SPHE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor 1 to 1  
Invited speakers

### Healthy peer relationships

SPHE Programme  
CSPE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor 1 to 1  
Invited Speaker/Drama

### Relationships and Sexuality

SPHE Programme  
CSPE Programme  
RSE Programme  
Guidance Counsellor 1 to 1

### Health and Safety

SPHE Programme  
Invited Speakers

### Stress and Exam Pressure

SPHE Programme

### Goal Setting

SPHE Programme Guidance  
Counsellor 1 to 1

### Study Skills

Study Skills Programme  
SPHE Programme



## Study Skills Day

# Guidance and Counselling Plan

## Transition Year

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for Transition Year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with the T.Y. Co-ordinator and the T.Y. team. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Education areas are: decision making skills, consequences, team work, personal responsibility and contemporary issues. In Educational Guidance the topics covered are: type of colleges, how to find information, interview techniques, personal presentation, skills audit, job search, CV and cover letters and work experience. In the Career Guidance area, the areas covered are: Goal setting, self-motivation dealing with change and dealing with crises.

**The students follow the *Reach Workbook* developed by [careersportal.ie](http://careersportal.ie) and have three weeks of work experience placements.**

Number of weekly timetabled classes:    Guidance:        1

## RSE

- |                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Decision Making Skills  | Role playing |
| ▪ Consequences            | Project Work |
| ▪ Personal Responsibility |              |
| ▪ Moral Dilemmas          |              |
| ▪ Team Work Community     |              |
| ▪ Budget Management       |              |

## Educational Guidance



- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ Qualifications                | Class Presentations                  |
| ▪ Progression Routes            | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |
| ▪ How to find Information       | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |
| ▪ CV & Cover Letters Interviews | Class in Computer Room               |
| ▪ Interviews                    | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |
| ▪ Career Investigation          | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |
| ▪ Work Experience               | Class Presentation and REAC Handbook |
| ▪ Transferable Skills           | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |
| ▪ World of Work                 | Class Preparation & REACH Handbook   |

## Careers Education

- |                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Testing and Feedback | Group testing                        |
|                      | Individual testing                   |
|                      | Written test results                 |
|                      | Individual meetings for each student |

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Senior Cycle Information | Class Presentations           |
|                          | Information Booklet           |
|                          | Information Night for parents |
|                          | Individual appointments       |
|                          | Appointments for parents      |
|                          | Programme co-ordinators       |
|                          | Subject Teachers              |

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Subject Choice | Class Presentations |
|                | Information Booklet |



Information Night for students and parents  
Individual appointments  
Appointments for parents

Types of College

Class Presentation  
Reach Workbook

World of Work

Class Presentation  
Reach Workbook

## Transition Year Programme

**Approximate duration of Module:** 1 Class per week for duration of the school year.

### Aims

The programme aims to introduce students to the forces at work in the adult world, teach them the fundamentals of career planning and help them develop the necessary skills to function successfully in the world of work.

### Objectives

- Students will explore the concept of career in the holistic sense which includes education, work, family, leisure and community.
- They will assume life/ work roles in order to explore and experience issues and aspects of adult life and the world of work.
- By learning about themselves within these roles they will gain a real understanding of how important job satisfaction is for adults and discover it is an outcome they can achieve by making the choices that are right for them.
- While role playing occupations, students will earn and spend money, participate in community life, make decisions that affect their characters' lives for better or worse, battle with or celebrate chance occurrences and learn that every decision is a career decision.
- In their communities, students will make decisions on social issues that affect the future of their communities and themselves.
- College / University trips



## Teaching and Learning Strategies

- Teacher Input
- Group Work
- Experiential Learning
- Role play
- Individual Assignments

## Content List

- Preparing for Work
- World at Work
- Lifestyle
- Moral Dilemmas
- Community
- Handling Change
- Transferable Skills
- Adults in World of Work

## Assessment

- Assignments- individual and group
- Self-Assessment Exercises to gain insight into their interests, skills and learning styles

## Resources

- Reach Workbook
- Guest Speakers
- Interviewers
- Visits to industry/business

## Work Experience

Transition Year students complete 3 weeks of work experience.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for fifth year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with the RSE, SPHE and individual class teachers. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and the proactive engagement of parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Education areas are: substance misuse, personality types and personality development, decision making in relation to personal morality. In Educational Guidance the topics covered are: Qualifications, type of colleges, the points system, study methods and timetable, how to find information in a prospectus and the internet, interview techniques, CV and cover letters, work experience, UCAS, HEAR, DARE, Access Courses, apprenticeships and exemptions. In the Career Guidance area, the areas covered are: Subject Choice, Goal setting, motivation and study skills, career interest tests and careers project.

These topics have been identified by the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group and the general staff as the most important topics in the Guidance and Counselling Plan for fifth year students. The following page presents a detailed overview of how each topic is explored and delivered in various settings and by various individuals.



Number of weekly timetabled classes:

- Guidance: 1 per group
- RE: 1 per group

## 5<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

### Personal and Social Education

Substance misuse	RE class
Personality: types and development	RE class
Decision making in personal morality	RE class





## Educational Guidance

These topics are covered in the regular careers class and are occasionally supported by invited speakers.

Qualifications (NFQ)	Class Presentation
Progression Routes	Class Presentation
Type of College	Class Presentation
Study Methods and Study Timetable	Class Presentation
How to find Information; Prospectus, Internet, Interviews	
UCAS	Class Presentation
The Points System	Class Presentations /Information Booklet
College and course entry requirements	Class Presentations /Information Booklet
Information on FAS apprenticeships	Class Presentations /Information Booklet
DARE	Class Presentations /Information Booklet
HEAR	Class Presentations /Information Booklet
Access Courses	Class Presentations
Language Exemption Application	Class Presentations

## Careers Education

**Study Skills**

Study Skills Programme



**Goal setting and motivation**

Class presentations  
Guidance Counsellor one to one  
Invited speakers

**Career Interest Tests**

Administered in Class

**Career Project**

Individual career area research

**College and course entry requirements**

Class Presentations



## 6<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

The Guidance and Counselling Plan for sixth year pupils is developed and delivered in co-operation with RSE and individual class teachers. Where appropriate, the programme is also supported by invited speakers and the proactive engagement of parents. The topics covered in the Personal and Social Education areas are: exploration of sexuality, family planning, marriage and divorce, sexually transmitted diseases and aids, substance misuse. In Educational Guidance the topics covered are: National Framework of Qualifications, Ladder of Progression, the points system, finance and grants, transition to college, accommodation and budgeting. In the Career Guidance area, the areas covered are: Goal setting, motivation and study skills, UCAS and CAO applications, PLC courses, and apprenticeships

These topics have been identified by the Guidance and Counselling Planning Group and the general staff as the most important topics in the Guidance and Counselling Plan for sixth year students. The following page presents a detailed overview of how each topic is explored and delivered in various settings and by various individuals.

All sixth year students get a minimum of two 35/40 minute individual career appointments where they can discuss their career intentions and find out information about various colleges and courses. Many students also avail of additional appointments to further clarify their options. Students are also assisted in the completion of CAO, HEAR, DARE, UCAS, SUSI and Access applications. The Guidance Counsellor is also present in the school on the day the Leaving Certificate results are released and is available in the school on the following days when college offers are being made. Students are able to discuss issues either in person or by telephone. Class presentations on many of these topics are available in the appendix.

Number of weekly timetabled classes:    Guidance:        1 per group



## 6<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance and Counselling Plan

### Educational Guidance

<b>National Framework of Qualifications</b>	Class presentation
<b>Ladder of Progression</b>	Class presentation Invited Speakers
<b>Points System</b>	Class presentation
<b>Finance and grants</b>	Class presentation Invited speakers Parents Night
<b>Transition to college</b>	Class presentations Invited speakers Database of past pupils
<b>Accommodation</b>	Class presentation Invited speakers
<b>Budgeting</b>	Class presentation Invited speakers
<b>Personal safety</b>	Class presentation Invited speakers



## Careers Education

Individual career areas	Class presentation
Goal setting	Class presentation
Motivation and study skills	Class presentation
UCAS	Class presentations / video IT room Invited Speakers
CAO	Class presentations Videos IT room Invited Speakers
HEAR	Class presentations Videos IT room
DARE	Class presentations Videos IT room



### **PLC courses**

Class presentations  
Invited speakers

### **Apprenticeships**

Class presentations  
Invited speakers

### **SUSI**

Class presentation  
IT room

## **Careers Events**

Leaving Certificate students attend several college / university Open Days. Also, important information is regularly forwarded to parents and guardians of all traditional Leaving certificate students. This information is compiled by the Guidance Counsellor. The following topics are: CAO Application process, Grants, HEAR, and finance in general, PLC courses, apprenticeships and the UCAS system.

Throughout their final year, students are also provided with information on study skills, life skills and the transition from second to third level from invited speakers as well as various presentations from IT's and universities in this region.



## Reviewing and Evaluating Plan

The plan will be reviewed and evaluated at certain pre-determined times, in the light of experience and feedback from parents/guardians, students, teachers and others.

The plan will be reviewed with a view to amending it, if:

- The plan may need to be revised / updated from time to time to take account of new target groups of students, additional needs of students and new priorities.
- It may become evident that certain guidance activities are more effective than others or that some objectives have become redundant through the passage of time.

The plan will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning. Particular indicators will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. Examples might include the extent to which:

- Guidance is seen as a whole school activity
- The provision of guidance is a co-ordinated activity



- Positive feedback is received from students, parents and staff in relation to the effectiveness of the school's guidance programme
- The guidance plan is having the desired outcomes e.g. specific targets are being met.

## Appendix: Policy Documents



