



Causeway Comprehensive School

Whole School Guidance Plan



BORD OIDEACHAIS
AGUS OILIÚNA CHIARRAÍ
KERRY EDUCATION
AND TRAINING BOARD

Causeway Comprehensive School Guidance Plan

Background

Causeway Comprehensive School (C.C.S.) is a co-educational Post Primary School. It is governed by Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB) who work in partnership with the Presentation Order. We have a broad cohort of students from a large catchment area, our current enrolment is 566 students. We provide a well-balanced educational programme which caters for a range of abilities and interests. Our school offers a variety of programmes including the Junior Cert Schools Programme, Access, HEAR and DARE programmes, Pathfinders, Leaving Cert Applied and Transition Year. We also partake in L.I.N.K. School Completion Programme. We are a D.E.I.S. school. We work in partnership with parents to enable our young people to develop into well rounded individuals capable of living fulfilling lives and making a worthwhile contribution to society. In Causeway Comprehensive School we seek to develop an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust and courtesy. We promote a healthy work ethic and respect for each other so that all students are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential in a positive, inclusive and welcoming environment.

Aim

The aim of the Guidance Counselling programme in Causeway Comprehensive School is to:

- Develop an awareness and acceptance within students of their talents and abilities
- Cultivate and allow development of the social and emotional lives of adolescents
- Provide a counselling support structure within the framework of school life
- To identify and explain opportunities
- To help students take responsibility for themselves
- To help students to make informed choices about their lives

And in accordance with the ICG guidelines to:

“Ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices” and to: “Promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students, in consultation with their parents, having regards to the characteristic spirit of the school”

MISSION STATEMENT

Our school welcomes each student into a friendly, caring and supportive community, where we recognise that each person is unique and has different talents and needs. In partnership with parents we promote a Christian ethos and nurture a positive self-image in students. This enhances their self-confidence and allows them to reach their full potential.

We provide a well-balanced educational programme so that all our students can develop skills and attitudes that will allow them to grow into mature, responsible and well-rounded individuals capable of living fulfilling lives and making a worthwhile contribution to society.

Our learning support programme is a tangible sign of our commitment to an inclusive learning community. It is based on the needs of our students and will be evaluated regularly to meet changing needs.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

In C.C.S. we recognise that all staff has a vital role to play in student care and in the delivery of the school guidance and counselling programme. Through **pastoral care** many teachers meet students on an individual basis during the school year. The Guidance Counsellor plays a significant role in co-ordinating the school guidance programme and parents support the school guidance programme through consultation with the Guidance Counsellor, other school staff and by attending all relevant meetings organised by the school.

We therefore consider guidance as a whole school responsibility involving all members of staff to include principal, deputy principal, assistant principals, school chaplain, HSCLO, subject teachers, Co-Ordinators, year heads and permeating all subjects and all school activities.

THE GUIDENCE PLANNING TEAM

- Guidance Counsellor
- SEN. Co-Ordinator
- JCSP Co-Ordinator
- Chaplain
- School Support Team coordinator
- Wellbeing Co-Ordinator
- Year Heads
- Principal & Deputy Principal

Role of Guidance Co-Ordinator

The delivery of a comprehensive Guidance Programme is the responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor but a whole school approach is essential to realise this objective. A holistic approach to Guidance provision is essential to ensure all students have “access to appropriate Guidance” (9 (C) Education Act.1998). Guidance planning is to be considered a process, to evolve over time, reflecting the needs of all students, available resources and contextual factors.

Role of all Staff

All staff has a role in supporting students. To this end all staff has received training as mental health promoters and most staff have completed the SAFE Talk as part of a school in-services. All staff is aware of the reporting structures to the various support teams (Student Support Team, Special Educational Needs Team and the Positive Behaviour Team).

The Student Support Team

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Chaplain
- Guidance Counsellor
- SEN Co-Ordinator
- Home School Community Liaison Officer
- School Completion Co-Ordinator
- Wellbeing Co-ordinator
- A Year Head

The Chairperson and the Secretary positions rotate annually among the group.

Role of Student Support Team

The school has a very strong student support network. This body of people works closely to offer support and guidance to students, staff and students’ families. The student support team holds weekly meetings to facilitate the transfer of information on students and the identifications of students in need of support or students at risk. The team also monitors any students identified as being at risk. The following activities are also an integral part of student support:

- JCSP programme
- Personal Safety Board (Anti-bullying Committee)
- Breakfast club.
- Homework club.
- Mentor Programme
- Student Council
- Parents’ Council
- Parenting classes
- Regular meetings with parents
- Study skills
- Life-skills programme
- Friends for Life programme
- Contact with outside agencies.
- Check and Connect
- Extra-curricular activities.

Role of Parents

The school considers parents to have the most important influence, directly or indirectly, on the choices made by young people. Parents support the school guidance programme through consultation with the Guidance Counsellor and other school staff, through attendance at parent teacher meetings and at information sessions and other meetings arranged by the school.

Definition

Guidance refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions consequent on these choices. Students' development incorporates the following three interlinking areas:

- Personal and Social
- Educational
- Career

Guidance is an on- going process involving a wide range of learning activities such as information giving, counselling and assessment. In C.C.S. these are offered at the appropriate age and needs of the students. The process helps the students to develop and accept full personal, social, educational and career awareness of their talents and abilities and in this way, it helps students to grow in independence and to make well informed decisions about their lives.

Role of Chaplain

The School Chaplain is called to journey with students, staff, parents and the whole school community to help deepen an awareness of God's love in their lives and to foster the values of the Gospel. The role of the school chaplain is varied and multi-faceted. The Chaplain is appointed primarily to be a faith presence in the school. This involves the teaching of R.E. (Religious Education), the provision of religious services and times of prayer and reflection, marking significant moments in the life of the school community. The chaplain is available to the entire school community and is part of the Student Support Team offered by the school. He is a resource who is available to meet students on a one-to-one basis to support their personal well-being as the young person navigates their way through the demands of adolescence and school life.

Role of Year Head

The Year Head plays a very important role in the lives of students. The Year Head has responsibility for supporting staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. The Year Head also plays a very significant role in pastoral care. He/she will have daily contact with students under their care and is dedicated to making the student's educational experience a positive one. The Year Head works in conjunction with class teachers so that students are cared for and know that there are people looking out for them all the time.

Year Heads are in regular contact with the home and are available to meet with parents. They will offer support and guidance to parents as their child passes through the school.

The Year Head will:

- Monitor late arrivals and absenteeism
- Oversee the academic progress of students
- Ensure the Year group follow the code of behaviour
- Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities
- Facilitate Parental contact
- Support students at risk, address the needs of vulnerable students
- Meet weekly with Principal and Deputy Principal of the school to discuss and review issues concerning the year group
- Meet with teachers on a regular basis
- Take registration on an on-going basis with each teacher group
- Conduct assemblies on a daily or weekly basis with whole year group
- Support families in difficulty and report to staff in relation to the year group

Role of Wellbeing Co-Ordinator

The wellbeing Co-Ordinator should:

- liaise with the members of the Guidance Department to discuss the role of Guidance as a curricular area of the Wellbeing Programme and also how Guidance supports the whole school endeavour of Wellbeing.
- be aware of the learning outcomes for Guidance chosen by the department for its curricular area.
- support school guidance by organising regular meetings with the SPHE, CSPE, PE and Lifestyles teachers to ensure collaboration takes place.
- ensure that the learning outcomes of Guidance complement and enhance the learning outcomes of the other curricular areas and vice versa.

Role of the Home School Liaison Officer

- Liaises with the Primary Schools and gathers information about the learning needs of students.
- Co-ordinates an open night for all incoming students and facilitates a follow up visit to the school for them.
- Consults with the parents/guardians of SEN students and supports the families to achieve positive learning outcomes.
- Consults the Special Needs Co-Ordinator and other relevant school personnel regarding student needs.

Role of JCSP coordinator

Our Guidance programme is in line with the JCSP aim of experiencing success in school and rewarding that success with a positive Record of Achievement validated by the DES. The programme which we undertake with our JCSP students in this school is particularly applicable to those who are at risk of leaving school early or who may have low self-esteem.

Topics relevant to planning, subject choice, study skills, the world of work, identifying strengths, aptitudes and abilities among the group are some of the areas covered in the Guidance programme.

Role of SEN coordinator

- Is a member of the student support team and attends a weekly timetabled meeting as part of that team.
- Liaises with primary schools regarding students with Special Education Needs (SEN).
- Administers diagnostic assessment tests to students.
- Makes application to the D.E.S. for resource hours for incoming students with special needs.
- Monitors implementation of learning support programme and selection of students for learning support.
- Consults and liaises with outside bodies and agencies.
- Promotes the involvement of parents of SEN students.
- Co-ordinates Individual Education Plans (IEP) for SEN students .

- Co-ordinates the Learning Support Team to address specific learning needs.
- Co-ordinates Reasonable Accommodations at Examinations in consultation with the Guidance and Counselling Department and the Special Needs team.
- Facilitates communication with the general staff on Learning Support issues.
- Consults parents if their child needs Learning Support and collates consent forms.
- Informs the D.E.S. of SEN students who are no longer in the school and therefore do not qualify for resource hours.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The personal and social development programme is the practical application of knowledge and skills relating to a student's personal and social development, self-awareness, and decision-making skills. This programme is delivered through the SPHE and Religious Education programmes.

Counselling- Individual and Group

All students can meet with the Guidance Counsellor or the school chaplain. Counselling helps students to process their thoughts and feelings, to grow in awareness and understanding of the choices open to them, giving care and support to students in their learning to cope with the many aspects of growing up and the life influences that they encounter during these times.

All teachers, especially class teachers and year heads help students who may have personal difficulties and link closely with the Guidance Counsellor, who when necessary, in consultation with the principal and parents will **refer***students to outside agencies.

Refer involves:

- The referral of an individual student to the Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain by teachers or parents or resulting from meetings of the student support team.
- The referral of an individual student by the Guidance Counsellor, chaplain or Principal to other professionals outside the school, e.g. The National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS)/ Kerry Adolescent Counselling Services., Pieta House, Tusla & CAMHS
- The voluntary participation in counselling of the referred student will be respected by all concerned.

Confidentiality

In both Personal Counselling and in Careers/Vocational Guidance Interviews the confidentiality rule is followed i.e. School management, class teacher and/or

parents/guardians are informed if it is felt that the student is a danger to him/herself and/or to others. The Institute of Guidance Counsellor's Constitution and Code of Ethics (2004) offers clarification on the matter of confidentiality. The student is informed of the limits of confidentiality at the beginning of a session. If it is felt it is in the student's best interest to inform a Teacher/Parent/Guardian of a difficulty, this is only done with the knowledge, and agreement, of the student.

Appointments

To ensure the safe and effective delivery of the guidance programme an appointments system for personal counselling/vocational guidance operates. Appointments may be made with the Guidance Counsellor at any time during the day. The student requests and receives an appointment form which must be completed before the counselling session begins. For the student to attend at the agreed time, permission must be received from the class teacher, who signs the form. Teachers are reminded at staff meetings of the importance of guidance counselling for a student.

When the Guidance Counsellor is meeting with a year group, or is taking a group of students to a careers event or to attend at a guest speaker talk an email is sent to all staff members and a list of students attending is posted on vsware. This is for minimizing disruption and confusion and keeping all staff up to date with what is happening. When students are leaving the school to attend a careers' event a text message is sent to parents informing them and a parental permission form is returned to the school prior to the event taking place.

EDUCATIONAL

Participation in educational development programmes facilitates the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to studying, examination performance, choices of subject's levels and further educational opportunities.

The school considers the study of ICT skills as essential for every student.

Access

- Educational and career counselling is delivered through class groups where Guidance is timetabled alongside Religious Education and Physical Education. The Guidance Counsellor has access to these classes on a rotational basis throughout fifth year and sixth year.
- Through small targeted group sessions.
- Through individual pre- arranged appointments with the Guidance Counsellor.
- Through the LCVP classes in senior cycle.
- Through the Guidance module in the Wellbeing Programme.

Assessment

Assessment helps students to obtain a better self-understanding using psychometric tests and other inventories. Both the Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support Teacher use the standardised tests to access the needs of students.

The Dromcondra Reasoning Test is administered to incoming first year students and the CAT 4 G Cognitive Abilities Test is administered to fifth year students. The CAT 4 F is administered to potential LCA students in third year.

Other tests are administered by the SEN. Co- Ordinator.

The Guidance Counsellor and teachers make suggestions based on their knowledge and experience.

Guidance and Vocational Preparation

These activities assist the students with decision making, problem solving, behaviour change and skills for the ever-changing situations in their personal, educational and career development. Much of the classroom guidance activities provide learning experiences that are relevant to the school guidance programme. These may include information giving, study skills, values clarification, vocational and work placement preparation leading to work experience or work shadowing.

Career educational/career transition programmes

The Guidance Counsellor enables students to make the transition to further and higher education, training and employment.

College Open Days

The Guidance Counsellor informs all sixth year students in advance of the dates of College Open days and posts notices on the guidance notice board. The school facilitates as much as possible the attendance of interested students at Open days and career events. The Guidance Counsellor facilitates the attendance of sixth year students at a minimum of three College Open days. Students who wish to attend other open days are free to do so with their parents' permission but are encouraged to attend the open days which colleges hold on Saturdays.

Some fifth year students attend careers events during the school year and college speakers are invited to come to speak to them also. They visit local factories and businesses as part of their LCVP programme and they partake in work experience.

Leaving Certificate parents are invited to the school each year to a special information evening where the CAO process is explained. Detail information on the Higher Education Access route (HEAR), the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) is made available to parents. There is considerable follow up with parents regarding these schemes.

Placement

Work experience and work shadowing prepare students for the world of work.

Information provides students with objective and factual data on education and training opportunities, labour market information and entitlements.

Follow-Up

The Guidance Counsellor, the chaplain and the principal follow up past students where necessary and practicable, particularly regarding progression routes and college destinations.

Objective

The objective of the school Guidance Programme in the school is to ensure and to make realistic, in so far as is humanly possible and resources allow,

- The Mission Statement of the school
- The Directives of the Education Act
- The Guidelines of the Department of Education and Science
- The Objectives of the DEIS initiative

These objectives are in line with good practice established by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors and The National Centre for Guidance in Education.

The school sees Guidance provision as a continuous developmental process. The school endeavours to draw up a programme which helps to facilitate the decision-making process which is an integral part of education for our students and to make these processes an exciting and positive experience.

The Guidance Programme takes into consideration all students. The Guidance Counsellor, while aware of and involved in all aspects of student welfare, works in particular with the transition from primary to second level education, the choice of options and subjects for fifth year students and particularly with the vocational and educational requirements of the Leaving Cert students.

Advice is given, in consultation with subject teachers and parents, on the level at which Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate examination subjects are taken. Where students request a change of subject level the Guidance Counsellor manages the process through consultation with the students, the teachers involved, the parents, the year head and the Principal.

All third-year students are given a school produced information booklet outlining information and advice on all subject options for Leaving Cert. The Guidance Counsellor enlists the help of subject teachers and arranges subject information sessions for all third-year students, where advice is given on course content and the standard of work required at Senior Level.

The Guidance Counsellor arranges to meet with Third Year students individually or in small groups, if further help or clarification is required. Parents are invited to information sessions in the school prior to decisions on Leaving Cert subject choices. Further assistance and counselling is available to these students up to the end of September in fifth year.

DISCONTINUING OR CHANGING A SUBJECT OR CHANGING SUBJECT LEVEL

Every effort is made to help a student continue with their chosen option subject especially after the deadline of the end of September has passed. No decision on this matter should be made until the student first has a discussion with the Guidance Counsellor. The Guidance Counsellor manages the process of change through consultation with the students, the teachers involved, the parents and the Principal. The Student Subject/Level Transfer Form must be completed and signed by the relevant staff and parents throughout this process

Some final year students may request permission to drop one of their seven subjects or to discontinue the study of LCVP. This matter must be discussed with the Guidance Counsellor as dropping a subject may have consequences for college courses. The Guidance Counsellor manages the process through consultation with the students, the teachers involved, the parents and the Principal. The Student Subject/Level Transfer Form must be completed and signed by the relevant staff and parents throughout this process.

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECOND LEVEL

In October each year an open evening is held in the school where parents of sixth class primary school students can meet with the teachers and students and view the school facilities and enrol as students for the coming year.

Following the open evening the Principal, Deputy Principal, HSCL or first Year Head visits the primary schools in the area to meet with the students of sixth class and bring them to the school to witness what is on offer, to meet with the Guidance Counsellor, the SEN Co-Ordinator and with other teachers.

The school prospectus, Admissions Policy, Code of Behaviour and other essential information is posted to the parents of all sixth-class students who have applied to enrol.

During the third term of the school year the SEN Co- Ordinator, with the assistance of the HSCLO, collates any psychological reports which the sixth class may have. Relevant resource hours will be assigned by the SEN Co-Ordinator and the Principal.

The new students are assessed (Dromcondra Reasoning Test) during an arranged Saturday or during their first days in secondary school. Should the SEN. Co- Ordinator discover that students other than those assigned resource hours require special tuition, she contacts the parents, the school psychologist and the Primary Schools of the students before setting up learning support classes for these students. CAT 4 testing will be administered during the first term of the incoming first years. Therefore, these students will have completed both CAT 4 and Dromcondra Reasoning testing (DTR) by December of their first year.

Mentoring

A mentoring programme is arranged each year which aims to link First Year students with students of TY and Fifth year. The aim of the programme is to support First Years in the transition from primary to secondary school. TY students and Fifth years students undergo relevant training. This is facilitated by a designated person.

Testing

First Years: All incoming first year students undertake the Dromcondra Reasoning Test to check Numerical Ability and Verbal Reasoning. The Guidance Counsellor assists with the administration of these tests.

EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

In keeping with the ethos of the school and our DEIS status the school endeavours to give every assistance to students and their parents to become aware of the benefits of obtaining third level qualifications. Students are also given the opportunity and encouragement to study subjects at the highest level in accordance with their individual needs.

Special Educational Needs

The school makes every possible effort to address the needs of students with special educational needs within the school's Guidance Programme. Wherever possible this is done within an inclusive environment in the classroom or in the Guidance Counsellor's office. Parents and students are fully informed of all Third Level Access Programmes, of schemes and other initiatives designed to give special support to students wishing to avail of places in third level. The Dare programme is fully explained and assistance is provided with the completion of the application forms. Parents are encouraged to become involved with any initiatives which might enable SEN students to progress to third level colleges. Exemptions are explained and every effort is made by the SEN Co-Ordinator and the Guidance Counsellor to make the relevant applications.

The Guidance Counsellor, in collaboration with the SEN. Co-Ordinator, administers the RACE programme within the school. The programme is fully explained and assistance is provided with the completion of the application forms. Parents are encouraged to become involved with these initiatives.

D. E.I.S.

As C.C.S. is a DEIS school every effort is made to achieve the aims and objectives of the DEIS programme. The HEAR and DARE programmes are promoted to the students and parents to facilitate progression to third level and to improve attendance.

The UCC Plus programme is vigorously promoted and students avail of STEM tuition held at their campus. The students also benefit from the special tuition hours provided to the school by UCC and take part in the annual second year UCC student awards initiative.

Students are informed of The University of Limerick Access programme which facilitates access to certain courses using an alternative entry route.

The Pathfinders programme at Tralee IT is promoted and students are taken to attend taster programmes there during fifth and leaving Cert years.

Resources

- Facilities for guidance provision include an office, a small library and a display area adjacent to the guidance office and notices are also displayed in other areas throughout the school.
- Facilities for on line research and CAO applications are available in the computer rooms.
- The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (**IGC**)
- The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the School Student Support Team, of the DEIS co-ordinating team, of the Senior Management Team and is a member of the Kerry Branch of the IGC.

Professional Development

4. The principal, in consultation with the Board of Management ensures that the Guidance Counsellor is kept abreast of ongoing changes in training, education, work and child welfare. The BOM facilitates the attendance of the Guidance Counsellor at relevant events and at in-career professional training during the school year. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) AGM provides a range of in-services through the provision of workshops and presentations relevant to the work of Guidance Counsellors. Additional in-service is organised at local and at national level. The DES supports the provision of in-service for IGC members through funding. attendance at college open days, career seminars etc. Supervision is made available by DES through the Kerry Branch of the IGC.

Child Protection Guidelines

Since the BOM has formally adopted the Child Protection Guidelines of the DES as school policy, it expects all members of staff to abide by them.

Evaluation and Review

The school will evaluate and review the Guidance programme annually to ascertain:

- (1) The extent to which the guidance objectives are being achieved
- (2) The factors which are facilitating or hindering these objectives being achieved
- (3) New and emerging issues including unmet needs of the school population

The review may include:

- Soliciting the views of staff, students including past students, parents or other stakeholders.
- Surveying a sample of present and past students
- Surveying the parents council

The review will be facilitated by the principal in conjunction with the guidance team and will be approved by all relevant stakeholders.

Issues to be addressed:

- Improved access to computer facilities
- On line CAT 4 testing
- Setting up student school emails

Appendices:

Student Appointment Form

Please hand this appointment form to your teacher before class begins, for their permission to absent yourself from their class.

I -----agree to allow ----- to attend guidance counselling at this time.

GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

Name-----

Class-----

Time-----Date of Appointment-----

Subjects	Level	Expected Grade	Points	State which College or Training courses interest you, including college course codes
Irish				
English				
Maths				
Points total for your best 6 subjects			Total	

Do you use Qualifax? Yes---No---. What other sources of information are you familiar with?-----

Please bring this completed form with you when attending your appointment with me.

P. Mulvihill (Guidance Counsellor)