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Coláiste Gleann Lí

*Clash Road,
Tralee, Co. Kerry.
066 71 22552*

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Whole-School Guidance Policy

Office Hours

10am – 12pm

2pm – 3.30pm



School Manager

Mr. Richard Lawlor

Whole-School Guidance Policy

Mission Statement

Coláiste Gleann Lí is a multicultural, multi-denominational, co-educational post-primary school where all members of the school community are valued irrespective of age, gender, academic ability, class or creed.

Coláiste Gleann Lí staff will endeavour to provide a quality post-primary education open to all students in the community combining instruction in academic, artistic and technological subjects delivered in a caring and motivational environment.

In Coláiste Gleann Lí the staff members are committed to using the latest technology to prepare the students for today's and tomorrow's world.

Learning, Caring, Respect, and Inclusion in an innovative environment.

Rationale

This Guidance & Pastoral Care Policy and Plan will be infused with the key principles of our school ethos and mission.

The Education Act (1998) states that all second-level students are entitled to access to guidance under three interlinked headings.

- Personal & Social Development
- Educational Guidance
- Career Guidance

Delivery of all of these areas is a whole-school responsibility.

Aims

This policy aims to;-

...ensure that all members of the school community are respected, supported, cared for, and educated in a holistic manner ensuring the development of the whole person spiritually, emotionally, socially and academically.

...bridge the difficult periods of transition faced by our students, from primary school to post-primary and from post-primary to adult life, by providing appropriate guidance and support structures.

... promote self-esteem and confidence in all members of the school community and ensure that all individuals feel they are a valuable part of that community.

...to assist students in their overall development so that they can recognise, value, and enhance their talents and abilities and effectively manage their personal growth in a caring and positive community steeped in tradition, spirituality, and respect for all.

Objectives

- To outline current practices in guidance and pastoral care, formal and informal.
- To clarify specific roles and responsibilities where appropriate, but also to promote guidance and pastoral care as the responsibility of all members of the school community.
- To ensure on-going monitoring and reviews of procedures in the areas of policy development, student development and staff training.
- To outline planned developments in the 'Guidance Plan' in order to ensure that guidance and pastoral care are maintained as active and on-going components of school life.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of all members of staff to promote pastoral care and the holistic development of all our students.

The Board of Management

The Board of Management have a responsibility to ensure that the underlying principles of the school ethos and mission are reflected in all areas of guidance and pastoral care, formal and informal.

Principal/Deputy Principal

The Principal/Deputy Principal must take the role of ensuring that guidance and pastoral care are integral parts of everyday school life.

Collaborative Management Team

The Collaborative Management Team is also an integral part of the promotion of guidance and pastoral care in our school. All members of this team work to promote the holistic and pastoral approach to education underlined in the school's mission statement and in this policy.

Student Support Team

The Student Support Team will review and monitor the progress and development of pastoral care provision in the school and identify and act on reports of individual difficulties being experienced by students.

Teaching Staff

The practice of pastoral care is a challenge to the teaching style and classroom management of each teacher in our school. It should not be something set apart from the daily work of subject teachers since it centres around the personality of each of our students and the forces in his/her environment which facilitate or impede their personal development.

Parents

Parents are encouraged to become involved in school life through the Parents Council and regular contact with the school. It is imperative that parents will disclose information that will assist the school in ensuring the student has the best possible opportunity to learn in a comfortable environment. As partners in education we will work together to encourage the personal, social, spiritual and academic development of their sons/daughters.

Students

Students themselves are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and progress. All members of the school community are encouraged to promote positive education, development and behaviour. Achievements should be praised and progress rewarded.

Local Community

Preparing students for adult life is an important part of students' personal and social development. In promoting links with the local community students can see and experience first-hand the importance of community support. A variety of community groups are invited to give workshops and talks to students, as well as students taking part in community based activities.

Guidance and Pastoral Care Provision

Guidance and pastoral care take many forms, both formal and informal.

Informal Guidance & Pastoral Care

Informal guidance and pastoral care generally comes in the form of actively promoting positive relationships between students, staff, parents & the community. Its aim is to enhance and develop confidence, self-esteem and respect in day-to-day dealings with one another, and to foster an overall understanding of and consideration for the difficulties/issues faced by our students at various stages of their development.

A supportive school environment is essential for informal guidance & pastoral care to be effective. All members of our school community have a role in creating such an environment in which,

- ❖ ...people feel safe and valued
- ❖ ...self-esteem is fostered
- ❖ ...respect, tolerance and fairness are evident
- ❖ ...high expectations and standards are promoted
- ❖ ...there is support for those with difficulties
- ❖ ...open communication is the norm
- ❖ ...effort is recognised and rewarded
- ❖ ...uniqueness and difference are valued
- ❖ ...conflict is handled constructively
- ❖ ...initiative and creativity are encouraged
- ❖ ...social, moral and civic values are promoted.

Students are encouraged to talk to each other and to staff about difficulties/problems they may encounter, whether it is the school counsellor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal or other members of staff they feel comfortable with.

Formal Guidance and Pastoral Care

Formal guidance and pastoral care is in the form of specific structures put in place for the purpose of enhancing our students' educational experience and personal development.

1st Year

Transition Programme

Pre Entry

- ❖ National School visits
- ❖ Sharing of information (*National School/parents*)
- ❖ Open day
- ❖ Information Morning (*parents of incoming 1st years*)
- ❖ Experience taster programme (*activities – art, ICT etc.*)
- ❖ Orientation Morning (*1st Years only – end of Aug*)
- ❖ Literacy & Numeracy Testing (*May*)

Sept - June

- ❖ Class Teacher & Year Head support structure
- ❖ SPHE Classes
- ❖ Base groups (*SPHE*)
- ❖ Outdoor pursuits & team building activities (*Cappanalea*)
- ❖ Availability of a school counsellor
- ❖ Various Positive Living Workshops as necessary
- ❖ Physical Education classes (*inc' health awareness and active living issues*)
- ❖ Extracurricular activities (*all students actively encouraged to participate*)

2nd Year

- ❖ Class Teacher & Year Head support structure
- ❖ SPHE classes
- ❖ School Tour
- ❖ Various Positive Living Workshops as necessary
- ❖ Availability of a school counsellor
- ❖ Screening to identify and address possible errors in subject choices (*Student support team*)
- ❖ Physical Education classes (*inc' health awareness and active living issues*)
- ❖ Extracurricular activities (*all students actively encouraged to participate*)

3rd Year

- ❖ Class Teacher & Year Head support structure
- ❖ Availability of a school counsellor
- ❖ Study-skills sessions (*Guidance Counsellor, Year Heads, Subject Teachers*)
- ❖ Leaving Certificate subject choice information evening & booklet for parents
- ❖ Subject choice information sessions for students
- ❖ Identification of potential early school leavers (*student support team*)
- ❖ Extracurricular activities (*all students actively encouraged to participate*)

5th Year

- ❖ Class Teacher & Year Head support structure
- ❖ Screening to identify and address possible errors in subject choices
- ❖ Availability of a school counsellor
- ❖ Religious Education classes (*programme includes issues such as morality, life skills, world issues*)
- ❖ Participation in HEI Access programme activities (*UCC+, Pathfinders IT Tralee*)
- ❖ Timetabled Career Guidance classes
- ❖ Study skills session (*Guidance Counsellor, Year Heads, Subject Teachers*)
- ❖ Various workshops (*variety of guest speakers*)
- ❖ Extracurricular activities (*all students actively encouraged to participate*)
- ❖ Physical Education classes (*inc' health awareness and active living issues*)

6th Year

- ❖ Class Teacher & Year Head support structure
- ❖ Timetabled Career Guidance classes
- ❖ Availability of a school counsellor
- ❖ Participation in HEI Access programme activities (*UCC+, Pathfinders IT Tralee*)
- ❖ Religious Education classes (*programme includes issues such as morality, life skills, world issues*)
- ❖ Study skills session (*variety of guest speakers, Guidance Counsellor Year Heads, Subject Teachers*)
- ❖ Developing individuals study plans (*Guidance Counsellor*)
- ❖ Visits to HEI Open Days & Local Careers Fair
- ❖ Guest speakers from Industry, Universities etc.
- ❖ Group and individual sessions on CAO/UCAS procedures (*Guidance Counsellor*)
- ❖ Information sessions on third-Level grants, accommodation, scholarships etc.
- ❖ Extracurricular activities (*all students actively encouraged to participate at a reasonable level*)
- ❖ Graduation Celebration
- ❖ Leaving Certificate Results Day – On-site support and advice

Whole School Formal Guidance & Pastoral Care

- ❖ Regular communication with parents/guardians (formal & informal)
- ❖ Class Teacher and Year Head Structure – Promoting ‘Positive Behaviour’ - linking student behaviour with a pastoral approach. A key element of this is the school wide policy of promoting the positives in student behaviours and attributes rather than focussing on the negatives. Students are encouraged to follow the Code of Behaviour because of the need to make the school experience positive for all stakeholders in the school community.
- ❖ Availability of Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Class Teachers and other teachers throughout the school year for students with difficulties.
- ❖ Establishing an ICT based solution to support staff members who wish to report incidences of student issues to the school counsellor.
- ❖ Communication with external agencies where required in particular Education Welfare Board, National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive, National Council for Special Education (NCSE-SENO), Springboard, CAMHS, KDYS, JUST US, MY Project.
- ❖ Interlinked Policies
 - *Anti-Bullying Policy*
 - *Child Protection Policy*
 - *Special Educational Needs Policy*
 - *Code of Behaviour*
 - *Substance Abuse Policy*
 - *Critical Incident Policy*

College Open Days

- ❖ Students are encouraged to attend College/University/IT Open days. The school organises a group visit to the Institute of Technology, Tralee.
- ❖ 5th Year students attend the Kerry IGC Careers Exhibition where practicable
- ❖ Where students wish to attend other Open Days of interest to them, they are asked to inform the Guidance Counsellor.

Subject / Level Changes

1st Year students partake in a taster programme until the October mid-term break. This involves attending classes in option subjects for a three week period each. At this stage subject choice for the remainder of junior cycle will be made.

Students in 2nd, 3rd or 5th year who wish to change their choice of subject or the level of a subject they are studying must discuss the issue with all of the following,

- ❖ Teacher of the subject they wish to leave
- ❖ Guidance Counsellor
- ❖ Year Head
- ❖ Teacher of the subject they wish to take up
- ❖ Parents

Students in 2nd Year who wish to change subjects may only do so within the first week in September. It is advisable that this is based on 1st Year summer test results rather than just simply a change of mind. Changes can only be facilitated if there is a place available in their preferred new subject.

Students in 3rd year make their choices for senior cycle in the final term of year 3. Students in 5th year who wish to change the subjects they have chosen may do so only in the week after the Junior Certificate results have been released. Students will only be allowed to change subjects if both the school and their parents are satisfied it is in their best interest, and if a space is available in the specified class.

In the interest of the students' progression and in order to ensure consistency it is not advisable to change subjects in any other year group or at any time of year other than those specified above. However each individual case will be looked at and addressed based on the students' needs

Personal Counselling Provision

Each student is entitled to "adequate guidance" under the Education Act 1998. This will vary from student to student with some students requiring more time than others. Counselling has as its objective the empowerment of students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, address behavioural issues, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing.

Referral to Guidance Service

If a staff member feels that a student is in need of supportive counselling please refer the matter to the school Guidance Counsellor providing background information about the concern. A form is available in the staffroom which can be left in the secure post-box marked 'care team referrals'.

The Guidance Counsellor will then arrange a meeting with the student as soon as possible.

Possible reasons for an appointment may include:

Personal problems

Family problems

Relationship problems

Problems adjusting to post-primary education

Coping skills

Motivation

Making choices

Transition to 3rd level education and the adult world.

The guidance counsellor will retain a record of all such meetings and feedback to the care team only as necessary.

Referral to External Agencies

The Guidance Counsellor may be able to address the issue or may, with consultation with the care team, refer the issue to another appropriate person or agency.

The Guidance Counsellor & student care team will try to liaise with the person or agency and this liaison will act as a support for the student in school.

Parents will be contacted and advised to seek a referral from a medical doctor if and when it is not possible to refer directly to an outside agency. The onus will be on the parent to report back and inform the school if a referral is sought and if this referral has been made.

If the problem is in the learning domain the student may be referred to the education psychologist by the special needs coordinator.

If at all possible referrals should be made with parents' consent.

The school Principal must always be made aware that a referral has taken place. With all child protection issues the matter must be referred to the DLP and or the DDLP in the school (as included in child protection policy).

Declaration

This Coláiste Gleann Lí Guidance Policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Coláiste Gleann Lí on:

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Chairperson)

Signed: _____
(Principal)