

SCHOOL GUIDANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PILOT PROJECT

EXPLANATORY BOOKLET FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Your school management has kindly agreed to take part in this pilot project: School Guidance Review and Development Plan. This explanatory booklet is a more detailed and expanded version of the one-page Briefing Document already sent to schools participating in the Pilot Project.

1. In 1996 the Department of Education published a booklet and circulated this to all post-primary schools entitled **Guidelines for the Practice of Guidance and Counselling in Schools**. This defines guidance and counselling as the *“full range of interventions or activities which assist pupils to make choices about their lives”*. *“For second level pupils, these choices are focused in a developmental way on three key areas: personal and social; educational; career”*.
(See point 10 for more details on the three areas referred to here.)
2. The **Guidelines...** pointed out the role of **all school staff** in responding to the career, educational, and personal and social needs of pupils in their care. Some staff through their specialist training e.g. guidance counsellor or through their roles e.g. Year/Class Tutor, have specific additional responsibilities in this regard.
3. The **Guidelines...** highlighted the need for schools to review, in partnership with all concerned, how the guidance needs of pupils are being met and to develop a programme and plan to meet the particular needs of the school and its curriculum. The **Guidelines...** noted the role of the school management, the guidance counsellor, and other school staff in drawing up the school's guidance programme and reviewing its operation.
4. This Pilot Project involves a set of activities, support materials and in-service training, designed to assist in the development of a school's guidance programme
5. The School Guidance Review therefore is a systematic approach for use by schools to examine what the career, educational, personal and social needs of pupils are, and how the school is currently meeting these. Guidance Programme Development Planning is a method of setting objectives for addressing the unmet needs of pupils and devising strategies for achieving these objectives. Support materials for the Pilot project include **Guidance and Counselling in Post- Primary Schools** (1999).

6. This Pilot Project has two purposes. *Firstly*, it aims to assist school management and staff in identifying (i) the career, educational, personal/social guidance needs of pupils, (ii) the programmes, services, and resources in the school that are currently meeting these needs, and (iii) guidance needs that are not currently being met by the school. *Secondly*, the instrument is designed to assist in the development of a plan to meet the unmet guidance needs.
7. The focus of the Pilot Project is the identification of the various guidance needs of pupils and the schools' response to these. **The instrument is not an evaluation of the guidance counsellor's work.**
8. The Pilot Project entails two days inservice training for the principal and guidance counsellor(s), and participation by school staff in guidance review and planning activities in school. The first day of inservice took place in Dublin on 15 September 1999 and the project second day will take place in December 1999.
9. The experience of school staff involved in the project will benefit all other post primary school staff subsequently. Your interested and active participation in the pilot project activities in your school is much appreciated.
10. For the purposes of the pilot project, it is useful that all school staff who are involved in the review familiarise themselves with the following three definitions with respect to what guidance means:
 - Personal and social guidance:** services, such as counselling, and activities, such as class/group work, to promote interpersonal communication skills, decision making, self-awareness, and the ability to plan.
 - Educational guidance:** services, such as counselling, and activities, such as class/group work, to assist decision making related to course, subject and level in post-primary school; motivation and learning; study skills and examination technique.
 - Career guidance:** services, such as counselling, and activities, such as class/group work, to assist decision making related to choices of education and training courses; employment opportunities; job search skills; work and other life roles.
11. The review process should clarify which guidance needs of which groups of pupils are being met and which are not. The result of the review should lead to a set of proposals as to how the unmet needs can be addressed - in effect a school guidance development plan.
12. The Development Plan can be structured according to immediate, short-term and long-term goals. The Plan can be used by the school to make a case for extra resources and/or to make better use of existing resources. The allocation of additional resources rests largely on factors or bodies outside of the schools.

13. This Pilot Project has the support of the following organisations and bodies, all of whom have been involved in the design and development of the process and materials over the past two years:

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland;
Teachers' Union of Ireland;
Department of Education and Science;
Institute of Guidance Counsellors;
Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools;
Joint Managerial Body;
Irish Vocational Education Association;
Association of Directors of Education Centres;
National Centre for Guidance in Education.

14. If you would like additional information, please consult the information pack, which has been sent to each participating school. The pack includes copies of the following documents:

- GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN POST- PRIMARY SCHOOLS:*
 - Reviewing Pupils' Needs;
 - Developing a School's Response;
- SCHOOL GUIDANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN:*
Background Paper;
- GUIDELINES FOR THE PRACTICE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS.

15. If you have any query or observation about the School Guidance Review and Development Plan, please contact John McCarthy or Liam Harkin at NCGE, 189 Parnell Street, Dublin 1.

Tel: 01 8731411
Fax: 01 8731316
E-mail: ncge@leargas.ie
WEB: <http://www.iol.ie/ncge>

John McCarthy,
Director
23, September 1999.

GUIDANCE REVIEW

WHY SHOULD A SCHOOL GET INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF A GUIDANCE PROGRAMME?

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

- Gives a clearer view of what is happening in terms of guidance in the school;
- Provides a framework and structure for development of guidance provision in school;
- Raises awareness of what the guidance counsellor is achieving;
- Synthesises what is happening – so that school policy is clear;
- Gives principals' organisations guidelines to address guidance issues in school;
- Allows affirmation of what is taking place.

SCHOOL STAFF

- Develops teamwork and co-operation;
- Raises awareness of what guidance is about;
- Affirms contribution of staff to guidance programme.
- Enables the staff to value their own contribution to the guidance programme through their own subject area and responsibilities, and to the personal and social development of pupils;
- Puts into focus the central purpose of the school.

GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR

- Enables guidance counsellor to be at the centre of a guidance planning process;
- Enables guidance counsellor to have assistance from school management and other staff to enable them to do their work;
- Enables guidance counsellor to tap into other school resources through networking ;
- It makes clear to the school the totality of guidance provision and the key role of the guidance counsellor within it;
- It enables the guidance counsellor to incorporate the range of guidance activities into a whole school plan;
- It enables the guidance counsellor to assess the extent of his/her contribution to the guidance programme and affirm it.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

- Makes for a more efficient school in terms of use of existing resources ;
- Provides clarity of vision on existing resources and needs;
- Provides an opportunity for school management to make interventions where needs exist and resources are available;
- Provides school management with an opportunity to seek resources to meet unmet needs;
- Provides criteria to assess how the guidance needs of pupils are being met ;
- Gives a context into which offers of external assistance can be considered.

PUPILS

- Focus on actual needs – those met and unmet;
- Provides an integrated approach towards responding to these needs;
- Adds a positive effect to school ethos.