



## **Workshop on Guidance Planning - Notes for Guidance Counsellors**

Department of Education and Science Guidance Inspectorate & The National Centre for Guidance in Education:

**Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) Conference**

***Cork: March 2003***

## INTRODUCTION

These notes are based on a workshop organised by the Guidance Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science for the Institute of Guidance Counsellors' annual conference in 2001. They are intended for use by schools to assist in the preparation of their Guidance Plan and may be used as a support document for school managers, guidance personnel and school staff. They make extensive use of material developed by the National Centre for Guidance in Education as part of the **School Guidance Review and Development Plan** (SGRDP) pilot project (1999-2000).

As part of their responsibilities set out in Section 9c of the Education Act 1998, post-primary schools are required to initiate and develop a school plan (Section 21). Section 9(c) of the Education Act (1998) requires schools to "... *ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices, ...*" As a result, guidance must now be regarded as a core element of the school's overall programme and must be available to students as required throughout their time in the school. It has to be seen, therefore, as an integral part of the school plan, and the Act places responsibility for the preparation of the school plan on the Management of the school.

Schools will differ in how they approach the process of developing the School Guidance Plan. A number of schools have already some groundwork in place with mission statements and policy documents developed, and core values identified. Schools that have taken part in the SGRDP pilot project have already reviewed the guidance needs of students in their schools, identified existing resources, compiled data on guidance needs and planned how these needs can be met in immediate, short term and long term perspectives. The Report of this Initiative may assist other schools in the guidance planning process and it is recommended to schools as a valuable reference point. The report is available on the NCGE website [www.ncge.ie](http://www.ncge.ie)

Some of the materials used in these notes were piloted in the SGRDP pilot project.

The School Guidance Plan should be drawn up in consultation with all school partners in order to ensure that it reflects the identified needs of students. However the guidance counsellor has a lead role to play in the planning process because of her/ his specialist training and responsibility.

Guidance planning is to considered to be a process, to evolve over time. Schools should take ownership of guidance planning and the guidance programme should reflect the needs of students. It is important however, that schools do not delay in beginning the process of designing a school guidance plan.

The NCGE is currently finalising "**GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL GUIDANCE PLANNING**". This important support document for schools will be issued shortly and will provide schools with more detailed assistance in developing their plans.

## Developing a School Guidance Plan

A School Guidance Plan provides an essential framework for delivery of the school's guidance programme. Successful planning should ensure a structured response to students' personal, social, educational and career guidance needs. The Plan will include all guidance activities: classroom sessions with students, individual interviews, visits outside of the school, meetings with management, staff, parents, support agencies etc.

### THE GUIDANCE PLANNING PROCESS

It is necessary to begin this process by arranging meetings and consultations with school management and staff to discuss the components that make up a school guidance programme, and to address the following questions:

- What are the guidance and counselling **needs** across all groups in this particular school?
- How can these be **assessed**? And how would you include all learning partners? (e.g. parents, students, past- pupils etc.)
- What **goals and objectives** are defined for each year group? And what guidance and counselling **activities** are planned for the students in each year group?
- What **resources** in personnel, facilities, and support will the school make available to support the achievement of the guidance and counselling objectives?
- What is the **time- frame** for the achievement of these guidance and counselling objectives?
- How does the school aim to **monitor** and **review** the progress of the guidance and counselling programme?
- **Learning Activities**: which activities would suit various groups in the school?
- What **budget** will be assigned to achieve this programme?
- What **review and evaluation** processes will be deployed?

Meetings and consultations with school staff and the education partners could be planned over a school year and result in a draft school guidance plan suited to the needs of all the students in the school.

### **Consultation with staff, management and the other learning partners**

In preparation for this activity, the Guidance Counsellor(s) should draft an outline plan detailing existing guidance and counselling provision in the school. This outline should identify areas not being covered and include suggestions as to how these could be achieved. A number of activities are suggested to aid this process.

\*(Some of the following activities that may be undertaken by schools are based on materials researched and piloted by the NCGE in the School Guidance and Development Plan, pilot project (1999-2000))

### **Meeting with School Staff**

During a meeting of all staff, the Guidance Counsellor gives a brief presentation outlining existing guidance provision in the school. Staff are informed of the need for a school guidance plan and the necessity of them being involved in the development of the school guidance programme, to meet the needs of all students. The purpose of this briefing is to engage the support of school staff to review the existing guidance programme. The Education Act (1998) identifies the need to provide for the guidance needs of all students in the school, including adult students, those from minority groups and those with special needs.

**Task:** The staff should be engaged in the process through a range of approaches they consider best suited to the school:

- Decide on the setting up of a small working party; management, staff, parents, students and other interested parties to meet and discuss various sections of the plan and report back to the general staff, within a decided time-frame
- A meeting, (or a number of meetings) with all staff to discuss how to create a plan
- A meeting, (or a number of meetings) with parents, students and other interested parties on what a plan should include

At these meetings, ways could be identified on how student needs could be assessed. A number of methods could be used, such as; brain- storming, distribution and evaluation of questionnaires for staff and other education partners and the completion of the activity sheets, outlined later in this document.

An audit of existing school and guidance resources should also be completed and recommendations for how these could be allocated and used.

The Guidance Inspectorate has a role to play in advising on school guidance planning; by meeting with groups of guidance counsellors and in the holding of workshops on guidance -planning. Inspection of guidance and counselling in schools includes, investigation of how guidance provision is integrated throughout the school population and within education programmes. During school inspection visits, Inspectors will view and discuss school guidance plans.

## Guidance Resource inventory

### Activity.

These should act as a checklist of existing resources for the school guidance team and guidance related activities.

### Resource inventory

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Number of students in the school</b> _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>In Junior Cycle</b> _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>In Senior Cycle</b> _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>PLC</b> _____</p> <p><b>Minority groups: Yes</b> _____ <b>No</b> _____ <b>Students from the Traveller Community Yes</b> _____ <b>No</b> _____</p> <p><b>Please list these groups:</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Students with specific/special needs:</b> _____ <b>Yes</b> _____ <b>No</b> _____</p> <p><b>Adult students</b> _____</p> <p><b>Part-time students</b> _____</p> <p><b>Other</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<b>Male</b> _____	<b>Female</b> _____
<b>2.</b>	<b>Does the school have a Guidance Counsellor(s) ?</b>	<b>Yes</b> _____	<b>No</b> _____
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Current DES allocation of guidance hours to the school</b> _____</p> <p><b>Other hours allocated by the school:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Please specify:</b> _____</p>		

	_____	
	_____	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Is the Guidance Counsellor allocated to guidance duties for these hours?</b> If No! How many hours are they allocated? _____	<b>Yes ____ No ____</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Does the school have any of the following posts? (please tick!)</b> Resource teacher _____ Home School Community Liaison Teacher _____ A SCP CO-ordinator _____ Other support staff _____ Specify: _____	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Is an office assigned to the Guidance Counsellor(s)?</b>  <b>Is this room equipped with:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A PC</li> <li>• A printer</li> <li>• A telephone</li> <li>• Access to the internet</li> </ul> <b>Is there a display area for Career Materials</b>  <b>Is there access to a computer room for groups to make use of guidance soft-ware</b>	<b>Yes ____ No ____</b>  <b>Yes ____ No ____</b> <b>Yes ____ No ____</b> <b>Yes ____ No ____</b>  <b>Yes ____ No ____</b>  <b>Yes ____ No ____</b>
	<b>Is/are the Guidance Counsellor(s) consulted about timetabling for guidance provision?</b>  <b>Are Guidance Classes timetabled?</b> <b>(If yes, with which year groups? _____</b> _____	<b>Yes ____ No ____</b>  <b>Yes ____ No ____</b>
	<b>Has the Guidance Counsellor(s) access to class groups by agreement and negotiation with staff?</b>	<b>Yes ____ No ____</b>

	<p>Are there opportunities for the Guidance Counsellor(s) and the school management team to meet? Yes ___ No ___</p> <p>Are regular meetings of the school care- team timetabled? Yes ___ No ___</p> <p>Is time allocated to the Guidance Counsellor(s) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see students for one – to – one meetings? Yes ___ No ___</li> <li>• to attend in-service training Yes ___ No ___</li> <li>• to attend college open-days</li> </ul>
8.	<p>Does the school allocate financial provision to the guidance service each year? Yes ___ No ___</p> <p>If yes! How much is this provision? _____</p> <p><b>Any other Information:</b></p>
<b>Identifying Needs</b>	

**Activity**

To identify the guidance needs of students and areas and populations that have unmet needs. Each year- group in the school requires a guidance and counselling input. A group of teachers could undertake the task of assessing student- needs, assisted by the Guidance Counsellor(s).

**Student Guidance and Counselling Needs**

A copy of this form should be completed for each year group and/or special needs group in the school

**Year Group :** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>What are the Guidance needs of this particular group?</b>	<b>What resources are available to meet these needs?</b>
1. Educational	Which staff member(s) will assist in this work?
2. Personal/Social	Which staff member(s) will assist in this work?
3. Career	Which staff member(s) will assist in this work?

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**Activity .**

Summary results for Review of each year group's Guidance and Counselling needs:

**Year** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Guidance Area</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Guidance Programme/ curriculum</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Materials available</b>	<b>Other: (please specify)</b>
Personal/ Social					
Educational					

Career					

Ideas on how these could be delivered:

## Activity

### Plan for developing school guidance delivery

### Objectives of the School Guidance Plan:

### Programme for each year group

	Personal/Social	Educational	Career	Personnel to implement programme	Time allocated	Resources
Year 1.						
Year 2.	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	<b>Resources</b>

Year 3.						
TYP	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	<b>Resources</b>

Fifth Year L. Cert.						
Fifth Year LCA	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	

Fifth Year LCVP						
Sixth Year L. Cert.	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	<b>Resources</b>

Sixth Year LCA						
Sixth Year LCVP	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	<b>Resources</b>
PLC						

VTOS	<b>Personal/Social</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Personnel to implement programme</b>	<b>Time allocated</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Other/ Special needs Groups						

Additional notes:

## **Activity**

### **Reviewing the process**

- A meeting to be arranged to discuss the findings of the working-groups and to draw up an outline guidance plan to include all year-groups
- A detailed plan to be compiled by a small staff team, with the support of the Guidance Counsellor
- Piloting of the school guidance programmes
- Review and evaluation of the programmes

A guidance plan for the school will include guidance programmes for both junior and senior cycle. In addition, (where applicable), it will also include provision for PLC, VTOS and adult students.

A monitoring committee should be formed to up-date the guidance plan regularly. The need to redesign a school's programme may become evident from the results of the reviews and from changing factors such as demographic, social and economic conditions. Thus the programme may need to be redefined in terms of new target groups of students, additional needs and new priorities established. It may become evident that certain learning activities or guidance practices are more effective than others or that some stated objectives may have become redundant.

## **Summary**

### **1. ESTABLISHING NEEDS, PRIORITIES AND ROLES IN THE School GUIDANCE PLAN**

This is an essential part of programme planning. This should be agreed by staff, management and the other learning partners

### **2. School Priorities:**

Once the guidance needs have been identified it is then important to prioritise which of these needs are going to be addressed, how and by whom.

### **3. Moving the guidance plan forward**

When the plan is drafted it is suggested that it be circulated to staff and the school partners for comment. The programmes for each year group may then be refined and presented to the board of management. The board of management should formally adopt the plan as an integral part of the school development plan and a formal school document.

## **Appendices:**

### **Supporting Educational Legislation and Policies**

#### **1. THE EDUCATION ACT, 1998**

The Education Act requires the Board of Management of a school to develop a plan based on the needs of the school. The school guidance programme is a part of the School Development Plan. Schools are required by the Act to “ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance” (Education Act, 1998, (9c). The Act outlines the responsibilities and functions of the Minister and Education and Science and of Schools in respect of guidance

#### **2. White Paper on Adult Education, 2000**

This White Paper called “Learning for Life” outlines the future development of Adult Education. This document outlines “...the establishment of Local Adult Education Boards representing key interests that will identify local area needs and help develop an integrated area plan, target priorities, provide comprehensive information and guidance services, co-ordinate the work of participating agencies, decide on the deployment of resources for specific programmes in the further education sector and support staff development in this area.”

Adult groups may form all or part of the school population and their needs will require consideration in the construction of a school guidance plan.