

Whole School Guidance Planning Section 3: 'Information Gathering & Evidence in our School'

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this section you will have:

- Explored the school provision of Whole School Guidance using the NCGE Framework.
- Examined guidance learning experiences offered to students using the NCGE Framework's areas of learning as a reference point.
- Identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement in the school's provision of Whole School Guidance.
- Presented your findings to members of the school community.

NCGE has developed some resources (tables / checklists / forms / questionnaires) to support you with progressing your exploration of guidance. These resources can be used by the school guidance group to explore whole school guidance and guidance learning experiences. You may wish to also involve students and parents in the process, that is up to you.

We will start by examining Whole School Guidance and the Continuum of Support Model presented in the Framework.

Part 1: Whole School Guidance: Continuum of Support Model

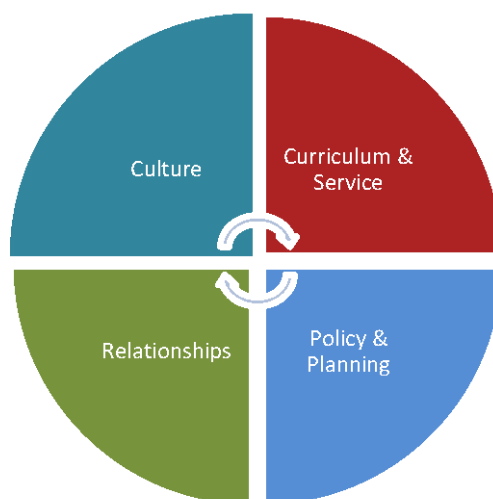
- **Is the school providing a whole school approach to guidance as presented in the Framework? If yes, how?**

Refer back to your responses to Reflection 5 in Part 1 and consider the Whole School Guidance Wheel on p. 14 of the NCGE Framework. This will facilitate you in progressing further.

Reflection 1: Discuss the WSG Wheel with your school guidance group. What does WSG look like in your school? Are there similarities with the NCGE WSG Wheel?

Activity 1: Now take some time to read the resource - '*Whole School Guidance: Template for Success*'

NCGE has developed this resource to support you in exploring Whole School Guidance. The resource proposes four key aspects to guidance: *culture, relationships, policy & planning and curriculum & service* across three key levels (*guidance for all, guidance for some, guidance for a few*).



Each key aspect is examined across each of the key levels. Take some time to review the resource and to discuss it with your school guidance group. You may find it helpful to reflect on and address the following:

Reflection Two

- Is this resource a useful way of presenting guidance in a whole school context? If yes, why?
- How do you feel your school is doing on each of the key aspects (guidance for all, guidance for some and guidance for a few)?

NCGE has developed a checklist (based on the above Resource) for individual elements of the four key aspects. Take some time with your school guidance group to respond to the checklist and to establish how your school is doing.

Activity 2: Complete the Checklist with your school guidance group.

After completing the Checklist consider reflection 3.

Reflection 3:

- Was this a useful exercise, why/why not?
- What were your findings? Is the school performing as 'excellent' in any areas? Are there areas requiring attention, if so, how can these be prioritized and addressed?

Activity 3:

Now that you have explored your school guidance programme Cycle for each of the four key aspects it's now time to examine your school's provision of guidance across the three levels: *guidance for all*, *guidance for some* and *guidance for a few*. Take some time to explore Form A. Complete the form as best you can highlighting programmes and school staff involved in delivering the continuum of support model. You may find it helpful to draw on your earlier work. This will give you an idea of how the programmes in the school are addressing *guidance for all*, *guidance for some* and *guidance for a few*. Are there any gaps?

Part 2: Areas of Learning and Competences

Is the school providing guidance learning experiences to address the competences set out in the Framework? If so, are students achieving the learning outcomes? How does this guidance learning relate to the Statements of Learning presented in the Framework for Junior Cycle and the NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines?

Activity 4: We have started to move into exploring areas of learning and competences. Take some time to explore Form B (this follows on from Form A). Review your responses to Form A - are the competences addressed for each area of learning? Identify with guidance for all approaches. Are there any gaps? How might these be addressed within available resources?

Now that you have completed Form A and Form B take some time to reflect on what you have achieved - you have identified programmes and members of the school community with contributions to make to the whole school guidance for *guidance for all*, *guidance for some* and *guidance for a few*. You have also started to think about the outcomes of guidance for students.

Reflection 4:

Take some time to reflect on the following:

- Are all students receiving *guidance for all* through school programmes and the curriculum?
- Are the programmes addressing the competences presented for each area of learning?
- Are students receiving *guidance for some* and *guidance for a few* through school programmes/ other?
- How are you applying the continuum model i.e. is there a clear set of procedures for identifying students receiving *guidance for all* who may need *guidance for some* and *guidance for a few*.
- Is the school community aware of these procedures and how to identify students who may need more support in terms of guidance? Are there pathways along the continuum so that students can move from *guidance for all* to *guidance for some* if needed?
- If the school does not have a formal continuum of support model in place at present (in respect of guidance) you may find it useful to reflect and draw from the NEPS model applied to wellbeing and learning support (areas related to the school guidance programme).
 - [NEPS \(2013\) Well-Being in Post Primary Schools](#)
 - [NEPS \(2007\) Special Educational Needs - A Continuum of Support](#)

The NEPS guidelines refer to 'screening' tools that can be used to identify students who may require additional supports. You may consider using a 'screening' tool to support students with identifying their guidance needs and their readiness for educational/career decision-making and transitions.

NEPS has provided links to resources which may be used in terms of identifying students who may need more assistance with personal & social development and learning. You may wish to adapt the NEPS resources to your specific needs. How might a screening tool work in terms of identifying students who may need more support in making career decisions and choices?

Now that you have started looking at guidance learning experiences and reflecting on your school's provision we can proceed further.

Activity 5: Take a look at Form C which contains three parts corresponding to each Area of Learning and associated learning outcomes. Examine the learning outcomes from a provision point of view i.e. is the school making provision for the learning outcomes through guidance learning experiences, indicate for each year group as appropriate. You may find it useful to refer back to your school's response to Form A. Then consider the evidence in terms of whether you think students have achieved the learning. You may or may not have evidence at present but it's good to start thinking about this. NCGE has prepared a short example using performance indicators which may be helpful. Take some time to read through this example.

Reflection 5

- How did you find undertaking this exercise?
- Are performance indicators useful, how might your school employ performance indicators to demonstrate student achievement of the learning outcomes?

Discuss with your group

- What is the school going well?
- Are there gaps in provision for particular students? If so, how can these be addressed?
- Are there areas for improvement? If so, how can they be improved?
- Re the column on evidence in Form C, what did you learn from completing this column?

You may wish to record your reflections.

If you found the column on evidence challenging to complete how about asking students directly? NCGE has developed some questionnaires you may find useful for students.

Discuss with your group on how you may proceed and the learning that may arise from this. In the past, when NCGE worked with schools in progressing whole school guidance planning, schools that consulted students found it a very worthwhile experience.

Analysing our data and reporting on findings

You are now at the stage of analysing your data and reporting on your finding. Start by taking some time with your school guidance group to review the work you have done and respond to these questions.

- What did you find?
- What are the school's strengths, what are you doing well?
- Are there areas for improvement? What are these and how may these be addressed with available resources?
- What are the gaps, can these be addressed?
- Are there opportunities? What are these?
- What are the main challenges, how can these be addressed?
- What did you learn from the process?

Activity 6

Record your findings and present your report using headings such as those indicated below:

- A summary of strengths and what is working well
- A summary of areas for improvement and gaps
- Highlight what can be done to address the areas for improvement/gaps – what resources are required?
- How will you know that the actions to address the gaps are working?

Share a summary with the whole school community.

You have now completed Section 3 and have explored Whole School Guidance.