

# Implementation of a Continuum of Support Model for Guidance using Aspects of the CIP Differentiated Service Delivery Model

## Junior Cycle Case Study

### Rationale

The aim of this Case Study is to provide schools with an example of how the Continuum of Support Model for Guidance presented in the *NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework (2017)* <https://www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework> can be implemented in a classroom setting. Schools can use and adapt this Case Study to suit their own unique contexts.

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### Case Study: A Continuum of Support Model

### Background

This case study will use the fictional 'Rafferty College' as its model. Rafferty College is a co-educational post primary school with 537 students enrolled. It is located in a large town, alongside two other post primary schools. The following programmes run in the school:

- Junior Cycle
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied

### Allocation of Teachers

- The school is not part of DEIS (designated disadvantage)
- The school has a total of 42 teachers (some are paid for directly by the school)
- The school has a guidance allocation of 13.5 hours (1 part-time guidance counsellor also teaching Business Studies and French 8.5 hours)
- The school has an allocation of 1.5 for a special class/centre/ASD Unit
- The school has an allocation for 4 teachers in SEN and LS
- A part time chaplain works in the school one day per week in a voluntary capacity
- Each year group has a year head and a number of class tutors
- All JC classes have one SPHE (social, personal and health education) class per week

### Key issues for the school are as follows:

- Large influx of international students in past 5 years. 34% of students are of international background.
- Regular occurrence of students wanting to change subjects during fifth year. In addition, students returning to school in September of fifth year cannot recall what subjects they signed up to, prior to the summer break.
- Students come from a rural background. In general, their primary school education took place in a small multi class setting. When new first year students arrive in Rafferty College, they are a little lost due to the size of the school.
- A recent Guidance inspection showed a lack of guidance for Junior years and it was recommended that the school explores implementing a continuum of support model for whole school guidance - *guidance for all, guidance for some and guidance for a few*.

### A recent MLL report recommended improvements in the following areas:

- Improvement in collaboration among staff in teaching and learning
- Integration of SSE in all subject areas
- Development of the school's wellbeing programme

Some Key Questions from a guidance perspective?

- The school has begun to implement a wellbeing programme as part of the new junior cycle but will have difficulty providing 400 hours of wellbeing as required by 2020 (266 hours accounted for through SPHE, PE and CSPE, there is a shortfall of 134 hours). The school has been advised to explore how guidance-related learning can contribute to the wellbeing programme using the 134 hours (approx. 1 hour a week over three years) – how will school use this 1 hour?
- How to connect School Self-Evaluation (SSE) to guidance?
- What are the guidance issues that could be addressed as part of the whole school guidance plan?

### School response to MLL

In response to the MLL Rafferty College organized a review of the whole school guidance plan (focus on junior cycle) and the curriculum. School management and the Student Support Team (SST) held a number of planning meetings to discuss the whole school guidance programme at Junior Cycle. As per Department of Education and Skills' **Circular Letter 0010/2017** the guidance counsellor was freed up to support meetings of the Student Support Team.

*"Time for individual students The Minister through this circular requires schools to adjust their Guidance Plans to meet Action 9.1 in Action Plan for Education 2017 which states that the Guidance Plan should "include specified time allocation for guidance counsellors to be available for one-to-one guidance counselling and time allocation for the role in supporting the organisation and work of the Student Support Team"* <https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/>.

The SST agreed that the school would trial the implementation of a continuum of support model for guidance at junior cycle as follows:

### Guidance for all:

- Following the curriculum review an additional hour was sourced for the guidance counsellor (for guidance-related learning on 'Developing My Learning' area of learning from the NCGE Framework (NCGE, 2017). [Appendix I from the NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines \(2017\)](#) was completed by the school linking the outcomes for [Developing My Learning](#) (p. 20, NCGE Framework) with the [Wellbeing Indicators](#)). This led to a reduction of one hour per week in second year. The hours available to the guidance counsellor (for guidance purposes) were increased to 14.5 hours per week.
- The school website was developed further to include links to resources provided by NCGE on [subject choice](#) and [study skills](#) and to subject information resource sheets provided by NCCA and other relevant agencies.
- [Guidance for all](#) to be provided to all students in junior cycle through Wellbeing guidance-related learning timetabled periodically (at critical stages and transition points) from 1<sup>st</sup> year-3<sup>rd</sup> year. Differentiated [levels of support](#) (including team teaching) to be provided to students (with identified needs) through guidance-related learning (see worked example below).

### Guidance for some:

- The guidance library to be open at specific times during the school day to facilitate junior cycle students in accessing guidance-related information and to meet a member of the Student Support Team - the Chaplain and Year Head if needed. Members of the Student Support Team to agree a roster between them. It was agreed that students needing additional support could be identified through these meetings and that referral would be made to the guidance counsellor ([guidance for a few](#)). The Year Head to follow-up as required.
- Teaching staff involved with junior cycle students to be made aware of the facility and to facilitate students meeting the guidance counsellor as arranged, and also to visit the guidance library during free classes/study periods. In addition, the opening hours of the guidance library to coincide with lunch time 2 days a week.

### Guidance for a few:

- The guidance counsellor to facilitate 'drop-in' meetings 2 days a week in the guidance office. Students to be advised of these times and student self-referral to be facilitated.
- The guidance counsellor to identify students needing additional support through guidance-related learning timetabled classes with Junior Cycle students (see worked example below).
- The Career State Inventory (CSI) to be administered to incoming first year students to identify students with a moderate or low degree of readiness for subject choice decision making.
- Behavioural observation by subject teachers and the Student Support Team and referral to the guidance counsellor as per identified student needs.
- Students to be referred on to external agencies for additional support as required.

## Example: Implementation of a Continuum of Support Model for Guidance in a classroom setting (periodic classroom guidance intervention)

**Target Group** - incoming first years      **Area of focus** - subject choice

**Setting** – classroom with each 1<sup>st</sup> year class over 4 class periods

Continuum of Support: level	Guidance –related learning	Member of staff	Content and learning activity
<p><b>Guidance for all</b> – all 1<sup>st</sup> year students (Timeframe: September – November) – 1 class period a week for 8 weeks</p>	<p><b>Unit of learning:</b> Developing My Learning (making educational choices in line with career aspirations)</p>	<p>Subject teachers in association with the guidance counsellor and the Year Head</p>	<p>Subject choice – information on subjects (knowledge and skills gained from subjects – presentations by subject teachers); how subjects relate to career areas &amp; HE/FET requirements; how subjects relate to student interests and strengths</p> <p>Administration of CSI to identify student readiness for subject choice decision-making</p>
<p><b>Guidance for Some</b> – (the guidance counsellor facilitates learning in the ‘moderate &amp; low readiness group’)</p>	<p><b>Unit of learning:</b> Developing My Learning (making educational choices in line with career aspirations) - group work</p>	<p>SPHE teacher and the guidance counsellor (team teaching)</p>	<p>Students working in two groups <u>high readiness group</u></p> <p>Self-directed learning activity – drawing on NCCA subject information resource sheets &amp; NCGE resource sheet on subject choice – self-help &amp; SPHE teacher assisted);</p> <p><u>moderate-low readiness group</u></p> <p>Learning activity – development of self-awareness/interests and strengths – facilitated by the guidance counsellor</p>
<p><b>Guidance for a few</b> – (the guidance counsellor offers one-to-one meetings in the classroom setting to all students, prioritising students in the low readiness group)</p>	<p><b>Unit of learning:</b> Developing My Learning (making educational choices in line with career aspirations) – group work and one-to-one guidance</p>	<p>SPHE teacher and the guidance counsellor</p>	<p>Students continue to work in their groups. Students have the opportunity to meet the guidance counsellor for one-to-one guidance over the remaining weeks. Additional meetings arranged as required (individual case-managed) with students</p>

## References

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