



PATRICIAN PRESENTATION  
SECONDARY SCHOOL



# Whole School Guidance Plan

**Patrician Presentation Secondary School,  
Fethard**

**Reviewed Sept. 2014**



## CONTENTS

### Section 1 – Aims of School Guidance Programme

- 1.1 What is guidance in schools?
- 1.2 School Philosophy and Mission Statement
- 1.3 The Aims of the Guidance Counselling Service
- 1.4 Rationale
- 1.5 Scope

### Section 2 – Current Guidance Provision and Programme

#### Part 1 - Provision

- 2.1.1 Senior Cycle
- 2.1.2 Junior Cycle

#### Part 2 - Programme

- 2.2.1 Senior Cycle
- 2.2.2 Junior Cycle

### Section 3 – Current Guidance Procedures

- 3.1 Subject Choice Procedures
- 3.2 Counselling and Student Appointment Policy
- 3.3 6<sup>th</sup> year Analysis of Results
- 3.4 Guidance Counsellor Year Calendar
- 3.5 Confidentiality
- 3.6 Reasonable Accommodation
- 3.7 Assessment Procedure
- 3.8: Guest Speakers
- 3.9 Records
- 3.10 Mock Interviews
- 3.11 Open Days
- 3.12 Student ‘dropping’ a subject / changing subject level
- 3.13 Pastoral Care team-meetings
- 3.14 Academic Achievement

### Section 4 – Current Policies related to Guidance

### Section 5 – Current Resources

### Section 6 – The Role of the Guidance Counsellor

### Section 7 – Developmental Areas

### Section 8 – Appendices



## Section 1 – Aims of School Guidance Programme

### 1.1 What is guidance in schools?

Guidance counselling and Guidance and counselling refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions to these choices. These choices may be categorised into three distinct but interlinked areas:

- Personal and social
- Educational
- Career

Guidance activities that assist students make informed choices include:

- Personal counselling
- Assessment using psychometric instruments and inventories
- Career information e.g. (career classes, personal vocational guidance interviews, attendance at career events)
- Use of information technology eg. Qualifax/Student finance
- Personal and social developmental programmes
- 

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. Counselling may include personal counselling, educational counselling career counselling or combinations of these.

### 1.2 School Philosophy and Mission Statement

Patrician Presentation S.S. aims to help each student achieve his/her full potential, academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially in a happy secure environment. In achieving this, the Guidance Counsellor plays an important part in the areas of counselling and guidance as well as involvement in the Pastoral Care programme.

### 1.3 The Aims of the Guidance Counselling Service

The Guidance Counselling Service is seen as having a central role in the continuous developmental guidance process of each individual student, which begins prior to the entry of the student to the school and concludes when the student has left the school.

#### 1.3.1 Guidance

To deal with all students in an eclectic and multicultural manner in order to aid them in developing their full potential.

To provide a framework for the delivery of the school's guidance programme.

To ensure a structured response to student's personal, social, educational and career guidance needs.

The plan is inclusive providing for junior, senior, minority, and special education needs of all students. The plan will include all guidance activities: career classes, Vocational Guidance Interviews, attendance at career exhibitions, open days, meeting with management, and support agencies.



To provide a caring and supportive service, which would be three fold:

1. Personal and Social
2. Educational
3. Vocational

**Personal and Social:** This would encompass developmental skills crucial to the students' education and careers eg. self awareness, decision making skills, planning, coping strategies.

**Educational:** This is developmental and would include such areas as subject / course choices, subject level, motivation and learning, study skills, learning related problems, psychometric testing.

**Vocational:** includes areas such as employment rights and duties, job opportunities, vocational education and training, further education, job and interview preparation, career research and career / course information.

### **1.3.2 Counselling:**

To provide a counselling environment which would be both caring and nonjudgemental on a one to one or group basis. This service would be aimed at helping students in areas such as:

- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Changing behaviours
- Effect meaningful changes in their lives

This counselling service is aimed at facilitating individual students in a holistic manner to realistically appraise their abilities, interests and aptitudes in order to make appropriate life choices and to achieve personal happiness.

### **Objectives**

- Develop awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities
- Identify and explore opportunities
- Grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves
- Make informed choices about their lives and follow through on these choices

### **1.4 Rationale**

Guidance is a universal entitlement for all students in post primary schools as per the Education Act (1998). This Act also requires schools to provide students with "appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices" (section 9c). The Education Act also requires schools to prepare a school plan (section 21).

### **1.5 Scope**

The Guidance Plan involves all aspects of school life and as such it is a whole school activity. While the Guidance Counsellor has the overall responsibility for coordinating and compiling the plan all members of staff have a contribution to make.

The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the school educational team and as such works with various members of that team to provide students with the best possible service.

### **Members of this team include among others:**

- School Management
- Class Tutors
- Subject Teachers and Departments
- School Completion Programme Coordinator



Home School Liaison Coordinator  
Special Needs Coordinator  
Transition Year Coordinator  
Parents  
School Maintenance Staff  
Support Personnel

**The Guidance Plan is a reflection of this teamwork.**

The Guidance Counsellor, as part of his job, may liaise with outside agencies such as:

Department of Education and Science  
Local Community  
Business  
Garda Liaison Officers  
Employment Agencies  
Feeder Schools (Year Head & Principal)  
Health Service Executive  
Referral Agencies  
Social Services



## Section 2 – Current Guidance Provision and Programme

### Part 1 Current Guidance Provision

#### 2.1.1 Junior Cycle

The Guidance Counsellor takes first year students for an introduction to the Guidance Service.

The First Years students also receive help and support in choosing what subjects to retain for 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year and in the implications of their decision. These meetings are timetabled in conjunction with the Tutor class.

Third Year students receive support in their choices for Transition Year/5<sup>th</sup> Year and in what implications this might have at Leaving Certificate level and for third level.

#### 2.1.2 Senior Cycle

Transition Year students receive advice regarding subject choices and levels and how these may affect their choice of career.

Scheduled talks are also given to students with regard to careers.

These talks are arranged with the TY Co-ordinator/LCVP Coordinator.

TY, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year class groups are each timetabled for one careers class per week.

Each senior student receives a minimum of two careers appointments with the Guidance Counsellor. If a student requires more time than this it may be organised by arrangement with the Guidance Counsellor.

### Part 2 Current Guidance Programme

#### 2.2.1 Introduction

The Guidance curriculum may be divided into two components:

- Formal
- Informal.

#### Formal Guidance

The Formal Guidance curriculum is delivered using two forms of intervention employing a number of methodologies:

1. Individual contact of a personal counselling nature and careers/vocational guidance.
2. Classroom guidance delivered in regular weekly classes to senior cycle students, rotating modules, class group or year group intervention as required.

#### Informal Guidance

The Informal Guidance programme consists of liaising with other Teaching Staff/Management to promote cross curricular links and to enhance the development of a whole school policy in relation to the delivery of The Guidance Plan. Meetings with Parents/Guardians form an integral part of Informal guidance.



### 2.2.2 Junior Cycle

#### First Years

Introduction to the Guidance Counselling Service  
Subject Choice and its implications.

#### Second Years

Subject Levels.

#### Third Years

Subject Choice and preparation for Transition Year/5<sup>th</sup> Year.

### 2.2.3 Senior Cycle

#### Aims:

The aim of the guidance Counselling Programme is to help students to develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities; to explore possibilities and opportunities open to them; to grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves; to make informed choices about their lives and to follow through on those choices.

The guidance programme at senior cycle aims to assist the full development of each student's potential, to help the student grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem and to prepare him/her for higher or further education, training and/or employment.

#### Objectives:

The guidance programme should endeavour to provide students with opportunities to:

- prepare to manage their successful transition from second level to further or higher education, training or employment
- identify their own key motivating factors
- prepare for successful transition into adulthood
- learn about job search and job retention skills
- develop research and ICT skills so that they can be self-directed in their career exploration and development
- learn about the world of work, including employment rights and responsibilities
- develop awareness of the need for lifelong learning
- develop skills to become independent and self-motivated learners.

#### Contents of the Programme:

<b>1. Self Assessment</b>	Career Interest Tests Personality Tests Career Values Tests	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>2. DATS</b>	Differential Aptitude Testing and analysis. Analysis of Careers.	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>3. Career Profile</b>		<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>4. Relating profile to career</b>	Abilities Interests Aptitudes	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>



# PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



	Strengths Weaknesses	
<b>4. Personality</b>		<b>Guidance Counsellor/SPHE</b>
<b>5. What options are available</b>	Powerpoint presentation Discussion	<b>Guidance Counsellor/ Subject Teachers</b>
<b>6. How the Education system and FETAC work</b>	Powerpoint presentation Discussion	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>7. The different forms of Third Level Education</b>	Powerpoint presentation Discussion	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>8. Open Days/Careers Fairs</b>	Preparatory Worksheets Reporting Worksheets	<b>Counsellor / LCVP Coordinator</b>
<b>9. Labour Market</b>	Labour market trends Career Development trends Employment opportunities Employment legislation (as relevant and appropriate) ICT developments in workplace	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>10. Challenges to living and learning</b>	Discussion	<b>Guidance Counsellor / SPHE</b>
<b>11. Social and Community</b>	e.g Issues Bullying Suicide Depression Illegal substances	<b>SPHE / Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>12. Grants and Funding</b>	SUSI Presentation Budgeting and borrowing	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>13. Study Skills and Exam Preparation</b>	Powerpoints, Workshops, Externally provided seminars	<b>Guidance Counsellor / Tutors /</b>



# PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



	(Student Enrichment Ltd.)	<b>Subject Teachers</b>
<b>14. Interviews</b>		<b>Guidance Counsellor TRYSS</b>
<b>15. Higher Options</b>		<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>16. CUKAS and the UCAS system.</b>	Powerpoint and individual meetings	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>

## Section 3 – Current Guidance Procedures

### 3.1 Subject Choice Procedures

Subject choices have to be taken by students on three different occasions.

#### 3.1.1 Junior Cycle

First year:

The choice, as indicated in the table below, is normally made by students in March of First Year.

Core Subject	Choice Subjects
Irish English Mathematics History/ Geography Science Foreign Language Religion CPSE PE	Business Home Economics Art Technical Graphics Woodwork
	Students are asked to choose two subjects to continue studying up to Junior Certificate Level

Second Year

Information re subject levels for Junior Certificate exams.

Third Year

Students have decisions to make in two areas:



- Whether to do Higher or Ordinary level at Junior Certificate
- What subjects to concentrate on in Transition Year.

The choice of 5<sup>th</sup> Year subjects is normally made in March/April of Third Year in conjunction with Transition Year students.

### 3.1.2 Senior Cycle

Students study three core subjects and choose another four subjects (with the exception of students where a specific exemption may apply). This choice is normally made in March of Transition Year. Students have to choose the subjects they wish to study in 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Core Subject	Choice Subjects
Irish English Mathematics PE	Agricultural Science Art Biology Business Chemistry Construction Studies Design and Communication Graphics Economics Foreign Language (French/ab initio German) Geography History Home Economics (Social and Scientific) Physics
	Students are asked rate their highest options and most common choices are offered accordingly as subjects in the subsequent year.

These choices can vary from year to year according to available resources.

In keeping with our policy of supporting our students through the process of developing their full potential the Guidance Counsellor provides help and support at each stage of the decision making process and is available to all students for advice and guidance.

## 3.2 Counselling and Student Appointment Policy

### 3.2.1 General

Students make appointments with the Guidance Counsellor for a variety of reasons:

- ✚ for Careers
- ✚ for Information
- ✚ for Personal reasons

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.

### 3.2.2 Career’s Appointment



Career Interviews will typically include the following:

- ✚ Analysis of Differential Aptitude Tests
- ✚ Analysis of Career Inventory
- ✚ Career Values
- ✚ Options Available

Based on this analysis a career path is mapped out for each student.

### **3.2.3 Career Appointments**

Priority for appointments is given to 6<sup>th</sup> Year students. Appointments for 5<sup>th</sup> year students will be scheduled from February onwards. Appointments for other years are dependent on time availability.

### **3.2.4 Arranging Appointments**

Career appointments are given two weeks in advance and are posted on the staff-room notice board as well as a written appointment given to each student. Changing timetabled slots is allowed in exceptional circumstances and if adequate notification is given.

### **3.2.5 Information Appointments**

These are arranged with the Guidance Counsellor outside of career class time.

### **3.2.6 Written Permission**

It is essential that when attending a Career or Information appointment each student present their permission slip to the teacher(s) concerned and that they bring their diary with them. When a student is meeting her class teacher again he/she should show her diary with a Guidance Counsellor note/stamp indicating the time of completion of the appointment.

### **3.2.7 Personal Counselling Appointments**

The Pastoral Care team members, Year Heads and Tutors play a central role in the delivery of the Counselling Programme.

Personal Counselling appointments may arise for a variety of reasons:

- ✚ A student may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by a teacher
- ✚ A parent may ask for some intervention by the Guidance Counsellor
- ✚ A student may approach the Guidance Counsellor directly and ask for an appointment

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.

### **3.2.8 Reasons**

Possible reasons for an appointment may include:

- Personal problems
- Family problems
- Relationship problems
- Coping skills
- Motivation
- Making choices
- Transition to 3<sup>rd</sup> level education and the adult world.



### **3.2.9 Procedure**

Personal counselling appointments may be arranged as soon as possible. Permission of class teacher will be sought if possible and appropriate.

Where this permission is not possible, notification of a student's appointment will be given to the Principal, Deputy Principal or school secretary as soon as practicable.

### **3.2.10 CAO Appointments**

The choice of career path is the responsibility of each individual student. It is the policy of this school that each student should be adequately prepared to make this choice.

The Education Act 1998 states that a school shall use its resources to ..... "Section 9 (c) ..ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices"

In complying with this each student is encouraged in developing his/her full potential and in making a Career choice that reflects his/her goals.

Where a student chooses to apply for third level education to a CAO affiliated college it is the policy of the school that each student is supported through the CAO application process. While it is the ultimate responsibility of each student to make the actual application the school will endeavour to support each student through the process.

### **3.2.11 Procedure for Making an Appointment.**

In furtherance of this aim each student:

- ✚ is provided with adequate advice and information regarding their choices
- ✚ is shown how the application process works and where practical a training demonstration is provided
- ✚ is afforded, where required, an allotted time whereby she can make her application using the school's computers.

The CAO appointments are made by the Guidance Counsellor and each student is given a written notice of her appointment.

The Guidance Counsellor may be present when the CAO applications are being made in school to offer advice, support and assistance where required by a student.

CAO appointments for applying to college are made in early January of the Leaving Certificate Year.

Before leaving for an appointment and on return *from* such appointments, students are expected to present the notification of their appointment to the teacher of the class/classes they are missing.

## **3.3 6<sup>th</sup> year Analysis of Results**

It is the policy of the school to inform itself of the career choices made by the students after the Leaving Certificate results have been released. This is a reflection of the concern the school feels for the development of the students.

1. In May students are asked by the Guidance Counsellor for permission to contact them in order to find out what career choices they made in regard to

- further education
- going directly into employment



- taking a “gap” year/deferring a place
2. Sixth year students are asked to provide the Guidance Counsellor with contact details whereby they can be contacted by the school in September/October regarding their final choice of course or career.
  3. In October this information is collated by the Counsellor and a presentation is made showing the final destinations of that year’s sixth year students.
  4. This will show
    - what colleges were chosen.
    - what courses were chosen.
    - what careers were chosen.
    - if any students chose to take a year out before entering third level.
  5. This information is made available to the Board of Management, the Staff, Students and Parents on request

### **3.4 Guidance Counsellor Year Calendar**

The Guidance Counsellor shall as soon as is practicable draw a calendar to show the various Guidance activities that impact on the school and shall post a copy of this in the Staffroom. A copy of this shall also be given to both the Principal and Transition Year Co-ordinator in order that school activities can be coordinated.

The Guidance Counsellor shall endeavour to keep this calendar updated with any new information as well as informing the relevant people when this arises.

This will typically show:

- CAO Conference
- Higher Options
- Guidance Counsellor’s Conference
- Other Relevant Guidance Counsellor’s Inservice
- Open Days
- Application Dates for -CAO
- UCAS
- CUKAS

Various Career events which may be of interest to students or staff  
(See appendix)

### **3.5 Confidentiality**

**3.5.1** A professional relationship involving confidentiality is at the core of guidance counselling. The Guidance Counsellor takes all reasonable steps to ensure that consultation with students takes place in an appropriately private environment.

**3.5.2** The Guidance Counsellor will take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about students obtained in the course of professional work. They reveal such information only with the student’s consent, but with certain exceptions, which include: where concealment would result in danger to the student or others; when required by the Law or designated guidelines; or for purposes of professional consultation or supervision.

**3.5.3** It is the duty of the Guidance Counsellor to inform each student about their legal limits on confidentiality.

**3.5.4** The Guidance Counsellor will discuss information about students only for professional purposes, and only with those who are clearly entitled to be consulted. Written and oral



reports contain only such data as are pertinent to the case, and every effort will be made to avoid undue invasion of the students' privacy.

**3.5.5** The Guidance Counsellor will publish oral or written information about students only with their written consent, or where the identity of individuals or groups is adequately disguised.

**3.5.6** Subject to the law, the Counsellor Guidance will take all reasonable steps to safeguard the storage, retrieval and disposal of students' records, both written and electronic.

**3.5.7** With the exception of recording of public behaviour, the Guidance Counsellor will make audio, video or photographic records of clients only where these persons have given prior written agreement to the making of the record and the conditions of subsequent access.

**3.5.8** The Guidance Counsellor will take all reasonable steps to ensure that colleagues, the Principal and others with whom they work understand and respect the need for confidentiality.

### **3.6 Reasonable Accommodation**

Occasionally a student may require special consideration in the State Examinations. Such special considerations may take the form of:

#### **3.6.1 Written Examinations**

Arrangements may be put in place to have question papers read to the candidate. In such cases, the questions may be read as often as the candidate requires. However, no elaboration or explanation may be given.

Modified question papers may be supplied substituting alternative questions for those which refer to visual material such as diagrams, photographs and maps.

Braille translations of question papers may be provided, following any necessary modification.

Question papers may be provided in enlarged print.

Candidates may be permitted to record their answers on tape recorder, typewriter or word-processor.

Answers may be dictated to a person acting as a scribe rather than to a tape recorder. This arrangement may be approved where the candidate's speech would be extremely difficult to interpret on tape or where a tape recording would not meet the particular requirements of the examination, e.g. making calculations in such subjects as Maths and Accounting.

Ten minutes extra time per scheduled hour of each question paper may be allowed where the candidate needs the help of a scribe or would otherwise be unable to make adequate use of the mechanical aids provided for recording the answers or is visually impaired.

#### **3.6.2 Oral and Aural Examinations**

In the case of oral examinations, school authorities are requested to liaise with examiners with regard to candidates who have special needs. The arrangements for aural examinations vary according to degree of deafness and are as follows:

The candidate may remain in the main centre but sit close to the cd player.

The candidate may remain in the main centre and be allowed to use a personal stereo player with personal induction loop. An additional tape/cd of the questions will be provided in such circumstances.

The candidate may be allowed to sit in a separate room and listen to a cd player either with or without headphones.

The selection and application procedure for such students begins in first year.

Any psychological assessment reports for incoming First year students are referred to



the Special Needs co-ordinator who has responsibility for this area. The Guidance Counsellor co-ordinates with them in identifying students with Special Needs and appropriate measures can be put in place.

The Special Needs Coordinator will, in conjunction with the Guidance Counsellor, assess the progress of each student and highlight any difficulties individual students may be experiencing in performing to the best of their abilities in the examinations.

### **3.6.3 Assessment Procedure**

All senior students will be assessed by May of 5<sup>th</sup> year. A meeting is held consisting of relevant subject teachers (such as English and History), Guidance Counsellor, Learning Support Teacher and management and students are assessed to see if there is a need to apply for a special accommodation from the Department of Education and Science. Previous assessments either in school or by a psychologist are taken into account. On occasion it may be necessary to refer a student to NEPS for an assessment. The Guidance Counsellor/Special Needs Coordinator will contact the parents concerned prior to such referral.

Junior Students are assessed by October/November of 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a similar manner. On receipt of the granting of reasonable accommodations from the State Examinations Commission, the Guidance Counsellor will advise all students and their parents of the relevant details.

### **3.7 Assessment Procedure**

A range of assessment tools are used in the Guidance Programme to supplement academic and teacher reports:

#### **3.7.1 Assessment of Incoming First Year Students.**

Currently the assessment test is administered by the Guidance Counsellor as part of the entrance test that incoming First year students are asked to take. This test gives the school an indication of the strengths of incoming students in the areas of verbal and numerical reasoning and perceptual understanding.

The Cognitive Abilities Test 3 (e) and the Group Reading Test 2 are the tests used, in addition to a teacher-set Maths and Irish test. In addition to the above The Principal and Deputy Principal invite each incoming student and their parents to attend an open evening in December previous to their entry. The Special Needs Coordinator will contact feeder Primary schools in order to identify the particular needs of students. The Guidance Counsellor will liaise with the Special Needs Coordinator in relation to students with special needs. The Special Needs co-ordinator will meet with all the relevant parties and process applications for the resources required.

#### **3.7.2 Third Year**

In November of third year students will be tested using the Differential Aptitude Tests for Guidance in order to see what their aptitude is for certain subjects. This information is used to guide students with regard to how well they can do certain types of work. The thinking is that a student is good in an area she will enjoy it as a career. This is used as part of the Self Awareness part of the Guidance Programme.

The DATS cover

-  Verbal Reasoning - understanding of the written word
-  Numerical Reasoning - basic strength with regard to numbers
-  Abstract Ability - making connections



## PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



- ✚ Spatial Ability - Visualize in 3D
- ✚ Mechanical Ability – ability in regard to things mechanical and technical
- ✚ Accuracy - The ability process information quickly and accurately

Results of these assessments will be discussed individually with each student indicating that student's strengths and areas of concern. In the interest of privacy and to discourage competitive comparisons between students actual scores on the tests are NOT disclosed to students or parents. (See appendix 2 for sample feedback sheet used)

### 3.7.3 Senior Years

Interest-based tests are used to see what level of interest a student would have in a particular career or course. (Careers Portal)

Personality tests are used to allow the students to gain more self- knowledge

Career Values questionnaires are used in order for students to work what is important to them in relation to their future.

### 3.7.4 New Students

Should a student enrol in the school in any other year he/she will be asked to take an assessment a test upon his/her arrival.

### 3.8 Speakers

It is normal for speakers from individual colleges to give talks to Senior class groups. These talks are both informative and useful as they give the students an overview of the courses which are available in different colleges and they give the students an introduction to third level education.

Other speakers are arranged subject to demand and in consultation with the students, staff and management.

Students will be given a feedback form in order to assess the benefit of each talk.

### 3.9 Records

The Guidance Counsellor shall keep such records as relate to his/her role.

Records are kept in two forms:

- Electronically
- Hard Copy

Electronic records are kept with due regard to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

These files will normally contain:

- DATS results (and graphs)
- Inventories results (and graphs)
- Analysis of Career Inventory/Values worksheets

These files will be kept on the Guidance Counsellors computer and a backup copy is made.

The paper file consists of:

- DATS original answer sheet
- A copy of each student's
  - Group Reading Test Results (GRT)/Drumcondra Reading Tests (DRT)
  - Cognitive Reading Test Results (CRT)
  - CAT Results

A personal form consisting of e.g.name, address, parent contact details.

Also, a record of each individual visit is kept on file.



A further database is maintained for all students containing the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Differential Aptitude Results (DATS)
- CAT results
- DRT results
- Career Inventory Results
- Other Test Results
- Special Need Resources

These files will be kept for five years after the student has left the school

All files are kept in accordance with The Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Act.

All files pertaining to an individual student kept by the Guidance Counsellor are available to be viewed by that student, with the exception of ability/personality assessments.

### **3.10 Mock Interviews**

Mock Interviews are arranged subject to demand with either the GC/LCVP Coordinator and/or TRYS.

These are organised following lessons given which coach the senior students in three main areas:

- a) CV preparation
- b) Letters of Application
- c) Interview technique

### **3.11 Open Days**

#### **3.11.1 6<sup>th</sup> Year Students**

As part of the Careers programme in the school 6<sup>th</sup> year students are encouraged to attend Open Days that are organised by Third Level institutions. In order to minimise disruption to school life, students will be encouraged to attend Open Days that are organised at weekends. The school views Open Days as a good way to meet and speak with lecturers and current students, discuss study plans, and find out more about what the different institutions can offer them. They may include an opportunity to visit any exhibitions hosted by various Institutes. These allow students to form a better picture of what is entailed in further education and of what life as a third level student is like.

#### **3.11.2 Procedure for Organising Open Days 6<sup>th</sup> year Students**

The Guidance Counsellor in collaboration with Subject Teachers and Class Tutors shall advise what Open Days are due in the coming year.

The number of Open Days selected will vary from year to year according to demand.

A list of selected Open days is given to the students. This may include Universities, Institutes of Technology and Colleges of Further Education.

Students select from the list which colleges they wish to attend and get written permission from their parents to attend.

This permission slip is given to the Guidance Counsellor. The list will be posted on the staff notice board.



Where practicable visits to College Open Days will occur in the afternoon in order to minimise the class time missed by students.

### **3.11.3 Information re open days**

Lists of open days are displayed on the school notice board. They are also available through the CAO website or individual college websites.

### **3.11.4 Value of open days and making the most of them:**

Open days are very important in the process of career exploration and planning.

Visiting a college for an open day should be regarded by the student as a hard-working day.

It should be a good learning experience enabling the student to look behind the title of the courses.

The focus should be on understanding what courses are about, rather than on what jobs they may lead to, or how much they will earn in the future.

Students think they know what is involved in subjects that are familiar, such as English or Geography or Business, but these are often very different at third level, therefore they should discover the differences when visiting the college.

### **3.11.5 Planning for the open day**

- ✚ Visit the college web site and read the prospectus before you go
- ✚ Get a map/guide of the college
- ✚ Decide beforehand which departments in the college you intend visiting
- ✚ Make a list of the courses/subjects in which you are interested
- ✚ Plan your time well and leave time for lectures, demonstrations, and or/ visits to laboratories etc
- ✚ Will you take an organised tour of the college? This may be very useful in giving you an overall “feel” for the particular campus.
- ✚ Plan the questions you will ask. In order to get answers you must ask questions.

### **3.11.6 Feedback from open day**

Students will be asked to fill out a feedback form to assess the benefit of the visit. This form must be returned to the Deputy Principal.

## **3.12 Students dropping a subject / changing subject level**

The student may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor in the event of that student wishing to drop a subject, to ensure they understand the implications, if any, of their actions. Equally in the event of a change from Higher to Ordinary, Ordinary to Foundation or any other request for a change in level, a student may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor for advice and Guidance. The Guidance Counsellor will consult with the relevant subject teacher. A Change of Subject Form must be completed and returned to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

## **3.13 Pastoral Care Team/Student Support Team meetings**

Regular meetings of the Pastoral Care/Student Support Team are organised between the Principal, Deputy Principal Guidance Counsellor, SPHE/CSPE teacher, Home School Liaison Coordinator, and School Completion Programme Coordinator. Times, regularity and attendance will vary depending on the circumstances. In the past they have traditionally been held on Mondays between break and lunch.



## PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



### 3.14 Academic Achievement

As part of the school policy on Academic achievement the Principal schedules each Fifth and Sixth year student for a meeting with the Guidance Counsellor. Each student will be requested to complete an Academic Profile form.

### 3.15 Study Skills Programme

The Guidance Counsellor will deliver a study skills programme to students in 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> year. Subject to interest levels, an external company may also be provided to certain year groups from time to time, the cost to be borne by the students themselves. See Guidance Calendar.

## Section 4 – Current Policies related to Guidance

### Policy Name:

- ✚ Equality/Dignity at Work and at School
- ✚ Substance Abuse
- ✚ Special Needs
- ✚ Homework and Academic Achievement
- ✚ IT and Information Provision
- ✚ Critical Incident
- ✚ Child Protection Policy
- ✚ Positive Discipline
- ✚ SPHE / RSE
- ✚ Pastoral Care
- ✚ Assessment
- ✚ Anti Bullying
- ✚ Strategy re Attendance and Participation
- ✚ School Self Evaluation Reports
- ✚ Etc. (this list is not exhaustive)

The Guidance Plan should be read in conjunction with these policies

## Section 5 – Current Resources

- ✚ Guidance Counsellor's office and classroom
- ✚ Phone
- ✚ Computer networked to the main school network
- ✚ Broadband available in office
- ✚ Notice boards
- ✚ Personal Laptop
- ✚ Use of computer room for class and resources
- ✚ Careers library
- ✚ Digital Library of Materials

The careers library contains current Irish and UK prospectuses as well as a range of careers related publications. All books may be borrowed from the Guidance Counsellor and are located in the Guidance Counsellor's office/at the rear of Room 16.



## Section 6 – The Role of the Guidance Counsellor

**Name of Guidance Counsellor:** Justin McGree

**Qualifications** B.A. (Hons), M.A. (Phil), H.Dip Ed.(Hons) Postgrad Dip Guidance and Counselling (2011).

In Patrician Presentation S.S., Fethard, the Guidance Counsellor is professionally trained to undertake the following tasks within the school guidance programme:

### **6.1. Counselling:**

Empowering students to make decisions, solve problems, change behaviours and resolve issues in their lives. Such activity may be personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling, or it may involve combinations of each.

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis.

Counselling on an individual basis is part of the support structure that the school provides to students. Within the overall time allocated for guidance, adequate time is given for the counselling function in the guidance programme.

The rationale for the time allocated and its usage is evident in the school guidance plan.

See the Department of Education and Science: *Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the implications of Section 9 (c) of the Education Act (1998), relating to students' access to appropriate guidance.*

### **6.2. Support:**

The Guidance Counsellor provides support to students, parents, teachers, the Principal, Board of Management and referral agencies in assisting the personal, social, career and educational development of students. Such support may include advocacy on behalf of a student. Support also refers to assistance in the planning and development of the SPHE programme, Transition Year Programme, guidance related activities.

### **6.3. Assessment:**

The Guidance Counsellor is trained to use a range of psychometric tests and other evaluative instruments to support relevant objectives of the school guidance programme. Such objectives may be related to career and educational planning, personal decision making and development of self-awareness.

### **6.4. Information:**

Assisting students to acquire, interpret and use information relevant to their personal and social, educational and career development.

### **6.5. Classroom Guidance Activities:**

Providing classroom based learning experiences that are relevant to the objectives of the school guidance programme. Such experiences may include information giving, information and communication technologies (ICT), developmental skills (e.g. planning, decision-making, study skills, communication, values clarification), and vocational preparation.



### **6.6. Planning and Organising Workplace Learning:**

This normally done in Transition Year and organized by the Transition Year Coordinator

### **6.7. Referrals:**

Seeking for students the assistance of non-school based professionals following standard procedures, e.g. NEPS.

The guidance counsellor also provides support for students referred to him/her by teachers, parents, and school management. The voluntary participation by the individual concerned is respected in these situations.

### **6.8. Professional Development:**

The guidance counsellor should keep abreast of on-going changes in the fields of training, education, work and child welfare. The Board of Management and school management should facilitate the attendance of the guidance counsellor at relevant events and at in-career professional training during the school year. Participation in these events should be related to the objectives of the school guidance programme. Attendance at non-school based events should be negotiated/agreed in advance between the Board of Management, school management and the guidance counsellor.

### **6.9. Guidance Activities that Assist Students to make Transitions include:**

#### **6.9.1 Careers education/career transition programmes**

Enabling students to make transitions to further and higher education, training and employment.

#### **6.9.2. Placement**

Work experience, work shadowing, and preparing students for employment. Transition Work placements are organized by the Transition Year Co-ordinator.

#### **6.9.3. Follow-up**

Following up former students regarding progression routes and destinations.

#### **6.9.4. Consultation**

With parents, school staff and students.

#### **6.9.5. Feedback**

Giving feedback to the Board of Management, school management and staff on the needs of individual students, groups and the school as an organisation, and how the school guidance programme has supported students' choices and transitions.

#### **6.9.6. Networking**

Establishing links with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance guidance work with students.

#### **6.9.7. Promoting change**

Assisting curriculum development in the school.

#### **6.9.8. Managing, Organising and Co-ordinating**

It is the Guidance Counsellor's role to organize the guidance activities into a coherent programme in conjunction with the management and staff of the school.

The nature and range of guidance activities as outlined above are based on the premise that guidance is both a whole school concern and a specialist area within education.

#### **6.9.9. Evaluation**

As part of this role the Guidance Counsellor will constantly review the programme to ensure it is meeting the demands of the students and their parents.

Students will be asked to complete evaluation forms at the end of the academic year.



**Section 7 –Developmental Areas for Year 2013 to 2015**

**OVERVIEW OF ACTION PLAN PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOL PLAN PERIOD**

PRIORITY #1	TARGETS	TASKS
<p><b>Priority Development Area:</b> To initiate standardised assessment of students other than those on transition to secondary.</p> <p><b>REASON</b> To provide improved clarity and data for school self-evaluation</p>	<p><b>Target 1.</b> Initiate testing of 3<sup>rd</sup> years before end of March in 2014/15 school year</p> <p><b>Target 2.</b> Draw comparisons to those results gathered by that cohort on intake in 2012/13</p>	<p><b>Task 1. Organise funds</b> <b>Task 2. Research and order tests</b> <b>Task 3. Administer tests, Present results in excel spreadsheet</b></p> <p><b>Task 1. Analyse findings</b> <b>Task 2. Discuss implications at SST meetings</b> <b>Task 3. Identify most suitable way of distributing the information to the relevant staff to allow for evaluation processing</b></p>
<p><b>PRIORITY #2</b></p> <p><b>Priority Development Area:</b> To develop a Special Needs Information Pack for parents</p> <p><b>REASON</b> To provide improved clarity and data for school self-evaluation</p>	<p><b>Target 1.</b> Develop the Pack</p> <p><b>Target 2.</b> Distribute and evaluate</p>	<p><b>TASKS</b></p> <p><b>Target 1.</b> <b>Task 1. Create the Pack</b> <b>Task 2. Identify relevant people to receive a pack (All, targeted students...?)</b> <b>Task 3. Make the Info. available in the most accessible form</b></p> <p><b>Target 2.</b> <b>Task 1. Distribute it to the Relevant people</b> <b>Task 2. Request feedback</b></p>



# PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



<b>PRIORITY #3</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>TASKS</b>
<p><b>Priority Development Area: To review presentations offered to parents by Guidance Dept.</b></p> <p><b>REASON</b> To improve attendance at careers presentations to parents</p>	<p><b>Target 1.</b> Gather information</p> <p><b>Target 2.</b> Devise appropriate materials and timings</p>	<p><b>Target 1.</b> Task 1. Survey Parents Task 2. Review presentations currently on offer Task 3. Gather ideas on what parents would like to see offered</p> <p><b>Target 2.</b> Task 1. Apply findings from target 1 Task 2. Agree appropriate times with parents/school Task 2. Request feedback</p>

## OVERVIEW OF ACTION PLAN PROGRAMME

**Priority #1-** Testing completed by March 2015. Findings to be added to School Self Evaluation Report at end of 2014/15 school year.

**Priority #2-** Information for Special Needs Information Pack to be researched by February 2015 and a draft to be presented to staff and Parents' Association by end March. Pack to be trialled early in 2015/16 school year with feedback to be completed by Xmas 2016.

**Priority #3-** GC to attend Parents' Association AGM in Sept. of 2014 to give a presentation on Study Skills to parents and to gather requests from parents. Submissions to be taken throughout 2014/15 school year and upon during that year. Survey to be carried out in Sept 2015 to elicit feedback from Parents.

### Ongoing Actions:

- Transitioning survey to be carried out at Parents' Association AGM in Sept. 2014
- School Website nearing completion and Guidance page to be uploaded in Sept 2014
- Reach+ being incorporated across all senior year groups though uptake and payment may be an issue for future attention in Guidance Planning.
- Appeals in respect to reinstatement of Guidance hours are ongoing
- Critical Incident Policy under review to add specific roles for staff.



# PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



## Section 8 - Appendices

1. Subject Inspection Report 2013
2. Change of Subject/Level Consent Form
3. Guidance Feedback Form
4. Open Day Choice Form
5. Open Day Feedback Form
6. Subject Preference Forms
7. Past Pupil Survey

**Reference has been made to the following documents. These are available from the school.**

1. Codes of Ethics of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors
2. Freedom of Information Act
3. Data Protection Act
4. Education Act 1998 - Section 9 and Section 21
5. Department of Education and Science guidelines on the implication of Section 9 of the Education Act on Guidance
6. Review of Guidance Resources
7. Brief account of the forms of counselling as practiced by the Guidance Counsellor
8. Statement from the Guidance Inspectors on SPHE
9. Guidance Provision in Second Level School (Circular Letter No. PPT 12/05) on the Practice of Guidance and Counselling in Schools (NCGE Guidelines 1996)



## **Department of Education and Science Subject Department Inspection**

**Date of Inspection: 05/12/13**

### **Recommendations:**

1. Issues emerging from the meetings of the student-support team should be considered in the context of school development planning.
2. Some additional clarification of staff roles and responsibilities in Guidance should be included in the guidance department plan.

### **Outline of plan to address recommendations**

1. Meetings now facilitated in a manner which focusses upon interventions for the many or few, with a 20min. time allowance for discussion of individual cases only (except where necessity or emergency warrants a further extension of the meeting).
2. In a school of our size, the primary provider of Guidance is the Guidance Counsellor. Roles implied through membership of the Student Support Team are clear, with the exception of the following:
  - Student Support Team secretary – Deputy Principal



# PATRICIAN PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL



- Long-term personal and educational support – Sr. Julianna
- Primary roles in attendance and retention – HSCL and SCLP

**Dated:** *01/09/14*