

Guidance Plan

The Salesian Secondary College School guidance plan is a structured document that describes the school guidance programme and specifies how the guidance needs of students are to be addressed. It is an integral part of the school development plan.

Mission Statement

Salesian Secondary College is a mixed voluntary secondary Catholic school which, under the trusteeship of the Salesian order aims to:

- Promote the holistic development (body, emotions, mind and spirit) of the young people with whom we work.
- Create an environment in which young people are supported to reach their full potential.
- Support young people to build positive and caring relationships with all those involved in their lives.
- Under the Preventative System of Don Bosco enable students to develop emotionally and become courageous, self-motivated people.

Rationale

The Education Act 1998 Section 9 (c) requires schools to "ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their career choices. The provision of guidance is a statutory requirement under this act".

Guidance Counselling

Guidance and Counselling refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, that assists students to develop self management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the four separate but interlinked areas of:

Personal and Social Development
Educational Guidance
Career Guidance
Moral and Spiritual

Personal & Social Counselling

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme offered on an individual and group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. It has its objective in 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. It helps students explore their thoughts and feelings and the choices open to them. It provides care and support to students as they cope with the many aspects of growing up. It is offered in a non - judgmental manner and observes appropriate confidentiality. Person-centred, Solution Focused Therapy, Reality Therapy (choice theory) and CBT are the main types of counselling we provide.

Educational Guidance

Educational guidance includes assistance in the transition from primary to post primary, from junior cycle to senior cycle and from second to third level or the world of work. It involves psychometric testing, subject, study skills, examinations techniques, organisation and motivation. It also involves decision making with regard to the senior cycle programme and further education. It is offered on an individual and class basis.

Career Guidance

This involves empowering students to recognise their talents and abilities while enabling them to make informed choices and to take responsibility for their futures. This also incorporates psychometric testing, interest testing, the development of self- awareness and acquisition of information and research skills.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school.

Salesian Secondary College seeks to provide a holistic education for all students. Our works are carried out within a Christian environment where, in an atmosphere of listening, the young people are encouraged to search for meaning. The school has at the heart of its ethos the regard for others and the protection of the vulnerable. Our guidance plan aims to assist the development of all students so that they learn to recognise and value their talents and abilities and effectively manage their personal transitions while at the same time learn to value and respect others and make a positive contribution to society.

Aims

- To provide a supportive and caring environment in which students can explore a range of personal, educational and vocational issues.
- To foster self-esteem and develop the self concept.
- To develop self- awareness in the student of their talents and abilities.
- To explore opportunities.
- To grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves.
- To make informed choices about their lives and follow through on those choices.

Objectives

- The student will grow in self awareness and develop a positive self esteem.
- The student will have the capacity to engage in personal reflection.
- The student will develop self -management skills which they will apply to their learning and other areas of their life.
- The student will develop techniques for dealing with pre-exam stress through planning and time management.
- The student will manage conflict in a constructive way.
- The student will identify options and goals.
- The student will learn research skills and obtain information which will guide them in their future educational life and career.
- The student will be familiar with ICT in the area of research.
- The student will understand the NFQ.
- The student will evaluate their options and make critical use of information.
- The student will manage CAO, UCAS, FETAC (QQI), Eunicas, Apprenticeship and other applications.
- The student will develop job seeking skills, e.g. CVs, letters of application and interview skills.
- The student will have a heightened understanding of the value of work & the labour market.

Guidance Counsellors

- Guidance in the school is seen as both a whole school concern and a specialist area in which the guidance counsellor plays a key role.
- The school has one fulltime guidance counsellors.
- Guidance meetings and pastoral care meetings are held on a regular basis.
- Child protection guidelines are followed and issues of concern are referred to the DLP.
- The Guidance Counsellor co-ordinates the Guidance and Counselling in the school.

- The Guidance Counsellor is part of the pastoral care team. The structure of the team is as follows:

Principal (DLP)
Deputy Principals
Guidance Counsellor
Chaplain
Religion Teacher
Special Needs Assistant
Special Education Teacher

The guidance plan aims to reflect this teamwork. This guidance plan should be read in conjunction with the related school policies. The theme of guidance and counselling run through all our policies.

SPHE Policy
Admissions Policy
Anti-bullying Policy
Child Protection Policy
Curriculum Policy
Homework Policy
Learning Support Policy
Personal Technology Policy
Religion Policy
Student Mother Policy
School Trips Policy
School Uniform Policy
Critical Incident Policy

The guidance counsellor may liaise with outside agencies including, but not limited to:

Department of Education and Science

Higher Educational Institutes

Further Education Institutes

SOLAS

National Learning Network

Local Community

Local Businesses

Garda Liaison Officers

Feeder Schools

Health Service Executive - Tusla

Referral Agencies e.g. Barnardos, Foroige, Jigsaw, Limerick Youth Service

National Educational Psychological Service (N.E.P.S)

Role of the Guidance Counsellor

Counselling

Counselling in guidance is designed to empower students to make decisions, solve problems and resolve issues in their lives. Counselling in this setting may involve personal counselling, career counselling, educational counselling or combinations of each. As a key part of the guidance programme, counselling may be offered on an individual or group basis as part of the developmental learning process or at times of personal crisis.

Support

The guidance counsellor provides support to students, parents, teachers, the principal, deputy principal and 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. This may also include programme development and planning in particular areas e.g. Transition Year.

Assessment

The guidance counsellor is trained to use and interpret a wide range of psychometric tests and other evaluative instruments e.g. interest tests to support the objectives of the school guidance programme. These may include career and educational planning, personal decision making and the development of self awareness.

Information

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

Current Guidance Provision

Junior Cycle

The guidance counsellor meets first year students to introduce them to the guidance/pastoral care service. The guidance counsellor explains the open door policy to students at this time.

The guidance counsellor organises the Teacher Mentor Programme and assigns teacher mentors to incoming students who are considered vulnerable. They may have been identified as vulnerable by their primary school, the special needs department, their parents or identification at First Year assessment tests. The Teacher Mentors are assigned to students that they teach regularly so that they can keep a close eye on them and chat to them at regular intervals about their academic, emotional and social needs. The Teachers liaise with the PCT if there is any issues.

Volunteer Student Mentors receive mentor training in August so that they can monitor First Year students. They operate games and social clubs that First Year students can join to help ease them into First Year and make friends. These are lunch time clubs. Teacher Claire Sheehy co-ordinates these activities and Student Mentors report back information about vulnerable students to Claire or other members of the PCT.

First year students have an opportunity to meet with the guidance counsellor for personal and educational counselling on a needs basis.

2nd and 3rd years meet with the guidance counsellor for personal and educational counselling on a needs basis.

1st years receive an induction programme from the Health, Safety and Hygiene Teachers around the areas of: transition to secondary school (coping with change), settling in, new friendships, what to expect from the student mentoring Programme, getting involved in extra – curricular activities, organisation, study skills, behaviour for learning, improving learning, being safe and healthy in school and new subjects and thinking.

All 1st years will access the Guidance Counsellor throughout the year for organisational help and study skills.

2nd & 3rd years can access the Guidance Counsellor for organisational help and study skills.

Third Year students progressing straight to Fifth Year get one-to-one advice about what subject options to take for Leaving Certificate and attend the subject choice career fair.

Senior Cycle

Transition year students receive advice regarding their subject choices and levels and how these may affect their choice of career. Aptitude testing carried out in third year are used in this decision making process. They are all met individually to discuss subject choice and how they can make informed choices for their future. Transition year students have 1 time-tabled career class per week. They also benefit from various career talks and talks from Higher

Education Institutes. There is also a subject choice event for TY students which involves current fifth years giving them advice on what options to take for senior cycle.

Personal counselling is available.

Fifth and sixth year students have 1 time-tabled career class a week throughout the academic year. They also benefit from visiting speakers from the various HEI's who give presentations. There is also an annual Past Pupil Pathways event where sixth year students can meet with past pupils and discuss college courses and career routes.

Students are encouraged to attend open days and careers fairs. All 6th years will be brought to the Mid-West Career Exhibition and UL/MIC/LIT Open Days and encouraged to attend LCFE and CCL Open Days. Every Leaving Certificate student attends two vocational meeting with the guidance counsellor. Students attending for interview at colleges and/or for work may organise supplementary meetings.

Current Guidance Programme

The Guidance curriculum may be divided into two separate components:

- Formal
- Informal

Formal guidance is delivered using two forms of intervention employing a number of methodologies

- Individual contact of a personal counselling nature and careers/vocational guidance.
- Classroom guidance delivered in regular classes to senior cycle.

Informal guidance consists of liaising with other teaching staff/management to promote and enhance 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.

Transition from Primary Schools

1st Years Pre-entry

The Guidance Counsellor visits the 6th class teachers of the local feeder schools. We have an incoming first year night in February for parents of students who will be attending our school. A presentation is given by the guidance counsellor here. Information is

given here on the support services within the school and the pastoral care structure. Information on subject choice is also provided.

The Guidance Counsellor administers the entrance assessment. The test administered is the CAT3. This helps in identifying student's individual needs and ability and in turn helps the Guidance Counsellor to organise mixed ability classes in first year.

The Guidance Counsellor liaises with special needs co-ordinator.

The Guidance Counsellor liaises with parents pre-entry as required.

SEN teachers hold a day in June for vulnerable students to allow them to settle in and get familiar with the school before they commence in September. The Guidance Counsellor provides a list of potential students using information provided by the primary schools and sometimes parents.

On - entry

- Guidance Counsellor meets all class groups to explain role, referral system and confidentiality.
- Organisation of student mentor programme which is continued through first year.
- Range of activities throughout the year with first years and their student mentor.
- Teacher mentors are assigned where necessary.
- The Guidance Counsellor passes information (collated from primary schools) on at meetings to student's tutors, mentors, year head, Principal, Deputy Principals. Appropriate confidentiality is respected.
- Monitor settling in period.
- Guidance Counsellor is available for counselling as required. She helps students work through issues such as settling into new school, coping with new situations, organisation, friendships, home and personal circumstances, homework and study skills
- Regular tutor time with input from SPHE
- Identifying students who may need extra supports in school
- Liaising with year heads, tutors and management
- Liaise with parents and referral agencies as required.
- Attend meetings with NEPS
- Attend pastoral care team meetings
- Positive Mental Health Talk (given by trained Transition Years) organised by the Guidance and the PCT
- Members of PCT meet First Years in small groups to see how they are settling in

Second Year

- Classes taken from other teachers to reinforce developmental issues dealt with in SPHE, such as study skills, motivation, self-esteem and looking at options.
- Liaising with year head, tutor and SPHE teachers.

- Liaise with parents and referral agencies as required.
- Positive Mental Health Talk (given by trained Transition Years) organised by the Guidance and the PCT
- Counselling provided as required

Third Year

- Study skills and motivation
- Preparation for exams
- Group developmental work as required, classes taken from other teachers.
- Parent's information evening on Transition Year
- DAT Testing All third year students do the DATs and get individual feedback before they make their subject choices for 5th and 6th year. This meeting is an opportunity for students to look at their strength areas as identified through aptitude tests and also to look at their areas of interest, subjects and possible careers for the future
- Liaising with year head tutor and SPHE teachers.
- Liaise with parents and referral agencies as required.
- Positive Mental Health Talk (given by trained Transition Years) organised by the Guidance and the PCT
- Counselling provided as required

Current Guidance Programme Senior Cycle Guidance

The aim of senior cycle guidance is to support the student throughout the senior cycle in the areas of personal, social and career related issues. It is our objective that each student is equipped with the skills to enable them to become well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of self and empathy for and care of others less fortunate than themselves. Salesian Secondary College students should complete their education as mature, confident young adults. While guidance and counselling is the prime responsibility of the guidance counsellor it would not be possible to provide a complete service without the commitment of the whole school community. The guidance service is being provided by teachers, tutors, year heads and management. This document primarily deals with what is currently being provided through the guidance department. The document will divide the senior cycle in to three separate year groups, but it should be noted that there might be some overlap between groups depending on requirement. It should also be noted that the activities listed are the activities provided as a rule, there are always other provisions that are required on an ad-hoc basis or subject to requirements of the particular cohort or individual students.

Transition Year Guidance

As students move from junior to senior cycle the guidance provision needs to develop with them. Students are faced with new challenges and are developing a more mature outlook and need to be assisted in their development of their sense of self. Transition year is the year that they commence with a formal timetabled careers class that is currently provided in

a designated computer room with each group having a class of careers each week. During this time the students will participate in the following activities:

- Paper Interest Testing – CII/SDS
- Multiple Intelligences – Howard Gardiner
- ICT guidance websites, research skills
- Each student will complete 2 online interest tests to assist them in their choice of career to investigate, Qualifax and Careers Portal.
- Introduction to third level structure, CAO, UCAS, PLC- FETAC- QQI
- Students will be provided with classes on the National Framework of Qualifications, how the points system and the college entry system operates
- Liaise with Special Needs co-ordinator and co-ordinator of RACE applications around results from DATs. There may be results showing which may indicate students need further testing, e.g. dyslexia screening test, WRAT etc
- Each student will complete a career investigation that may be of interest to them. They will use research skills including use of internet, prospectus and careers library.
- Planning for Open Days
- Attend UL/MIC and LIT Open Days in October.
- 3 week work experience programme
- Debriefing of work experience linking to possibilities for their future
- Encouraged to attend open days
- Guest speakers on various career areas
- Information night for parents on subject choice
- Students will also be guided on the programmes available in Salesian Secondary College, The Leaving Cert Established and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.
- Students will be provided with the required information on the various subjects available for senior cycle.
- Each student will prepare a curriculum vitae, Job skills, application forms, cover letters. This is carried out in conjunction with the IT teacher.
- Student mentoring applications & training. Peer mentoring programme.

- Preparation for mock interviews and work experience conducted by outside professionals.
- Counselling as required

Fifth Year Guidance

Fifth Year is a time when students begin to focus on their future options. The aim with this year group is to help the students to develop the skills and self-awareness to make appropriate choices in their educational, personal and occupational lives. All students are provided with one class period for the duration of the academic year in a designated computer room. They attend talks from HEIs throughout the year.

During their career class they will receive information on the following

- Students look at the various career web sites in more detail this year such as qualifax, careersportal, Gradireland, careernews, UCAS, CAO etc. They are encouraged to browse these sites, check entry requirements and become familiar with them.
- Students will complete a detailed career investigation into a career of interest to them.
- Students will do interest tests to further focus them to the career clusters that suit their interests' best. These include: CII and CDM.
- Students do study skills and motivation for the first 3 weeks of September in their guidance classes.
- Students are given a detailed overview of the main career sectors in class, e.g. STEM, Caring & Social, Business & Law, Creative careers, Education, Apprenticeships, Built Environment, Sport etc...
- Detailed overview of the Third Level Structure and Systems, CAO, UCAS, FETAC (QQI) Eunicas, Solas,
- Access Programmes such as HEAR and DARE are covered in career class.
- National Framework of Qualifications, Level 5, 6 ,7 ,8 etc how it all works.
- Points system and calculation of points
- Encouraged to attend Open Days
- Job seeking skills for work experience, e.g. updating of Curriculum Vitae, cover letter and job searches

- Students and parents are provided with information about career taster days that HEIs and other organisations e.g. HSE are running through 'Tutor News'
- Counselling as required

Additional work experience is encouraged throughout 5th year which is organised by themselves over holiday time.

Sixth Year Guidance

Students of final year students are very focused on the terminal examination and on their upcoming transition to third level education. During this year, students have careers classes provided once a week for the duration of the year. They also have a timetabled class where guest speakers from the various HEI's are invited to school.

Guidance counsellors attend CAO conference & annual IGC AGM

Guidance counselling attend counselling supervision and IGC branch meetings where CPD is continuously available

The following areas are covered in guidance classes.

- How to complete the CAO form and the importance of choosing courses wisely. How CAO works.
- Calculating points
- PLC – FETAC (QQI) colleges, what are they, what is available and how to complete the application process.
- Student Finance (Grants - SUSI, Scholarships etc.).
- HEAR & DARE and other access programmes
- Booking accommodation, transitioning from school to third level, costs and budgeting.
- Personal development and the transition to third level.
- CV preparation and cover letters for apprenticeships on request.
- Study skills & examination techniques in class and from an outside agency.

- Encouraged to attend open days. We organise visit to Mid-west Career Exhibition and LIT/MIC/UL open day.
- Information night for parents on the options available for 6th years during 6th year and after school.
- All students will attend at two vocational guidance meetings.
- Guidance counsellor attends school on Leaving Cert results day and is available to help students if they need it. Guidance Counsellor also phones all students the first week back to school in September to check in with students and record what they are doing.
- Counselling available to students as required.
- Students and parents are provided with information about career taster days that HEIs and other organisations e.g. HSE are running through 'Tutor News'
- They are informed of the dates for entry to courses through Central Applications Office (CAO), Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) and the Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) system and the requirements for each.

Counselling and Student Appointment Policy

A Student can ask (in person or by e-mail) for an appointment and they are given an appointment slip which they must present to their class teacher. The Guidance Counsellors may invite a student to come and visit them if they are referred by others. Referrals can be self referral, made by another student, parental referral, or referral by management, Year heads, form teachers & subject teachers. The voluntary participation in counselling of the referred student is respected by all concerned. Peer support is also encouraged. Students see the guidance counsellor on an appointment basis with co-operation from class teachers. Students will be referred to outside agencies when appropriate. A one-to-one encounters policy is available to refer to regarding meeting students in this way.

Students may request appointments with the guidance counsellor for a variety of reasons:

- Personal
- Careers related
- Information seeking
- Study Skills

As each student's needs vary, the time required with the guidance counsellor will vary from student to student and/ or from year to year.

1st year Any student may arrange an individual appointment or group appointment.

2nd year Any student may arrange an individual appointment or group appointment.

3rd year Any student may arrange an individual appointment or group appointment. Subject choice appointments will be scheduled for students progressing directly into fifth year. Students will also be given their DAT results in a one-to-one situation with the Guidance Counsellor.

Transition year students.

All transition year students may arrange an individual appointment or group appointment for personal, social or vocational meetings. Some will possibly want meetings around interviews /CVs / Vocational meetings. All students will be given appointments to get feedback on their DAT results in conjunction with their subject choice.

5th year students

Students may avail of appointments throughout the year for vocational, educational and personal purposes. They can be group or individual.

6th year students

In the case of sixth year career appointments, students are asked to fill in a career appointment data capture sheet. First round appointments are assigned based on the order that these data capture sheets are returned. If a student or parent is particularly anxious for a student to be seen it is possible to expedite the appointment. Students can also make appointments for personal and educational appointments with the Guidance Counsellor.

Parents are welcome to make an appointment on their own or to have their son or daughter present.

Personal Counselling in particular

Personal counselling may come about with members of the pastoral care team for a number of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Family or personal problems
- Relationship problems
- Crises
- Students having difficulty coping
- Stress, anxiety, panic attacks, self harm
- Exam/ academic pressure
- Identity, LGBT issues
- Anger management
- Bereavement / loss / separation / divorce
- Pressures around social media

Personal counselling appointments will be arranged as soon as possible, if time permits teachers will be notified in advance. Normally the student will get an appointment slip in their diary and must get permission from teacher of that class so that they can attend their appointment. This appointment slip must be signed by their teacher. This is the procedure for all appointments. There are times where a student may not have appointment slip as sometimes they could feel vulnerable at a particular time. In a case like this, students will be given a note for teacher at end of session or the Guidance Counsellor will e-mail the teacher at the start or end of the session.

Confidentiality

A professional relationship involving confidentiality is at the core of guidance. The guidance counsellor will take all reasonable steps to ensure consultation with students takes place in an appropriately private environment. The guidance counsellor will take all reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of information about students obtained in the course of their work is private and all notes kept safely. There are circumstances where confidentiality cannot be promised, including; where concealment could result in danger to the student or others; when required by law or designated guidelines; or for the purpose of professional consultation or supervision. All guidance work will be bound by child protection regulations and guidelines. The Guidance Counsellor contracts with each individual about confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality. All is confidential unless there is a disclosure that could be harmful to the student or to someone else. Appropriate measures would need to be taken then, refer to DLP, contact a parent etc but this would all be done in a discreet manner in which the student is fully aware of what is happening.

Assessment Procedure

A range of assessment tools are used in the guidance programme to support academic and teacher reports.

Assessment of incoming first year students

Currently the assessment test is administered by the guidance counsellor as part of the students' entrance preparation. This assessment allows the school to have an indication of the strength areas of the incoming students in the areas of verbal, numerical reasoning, perceptual understanding and also reading ages. Mixed ability classes are made using these results.

The Guidance Counsellor and SEN department look at the needs of the incoming students by linking in with the primary school, any psychological report, entrance exam scores and talks with some parents of students who may have SEN. SNA help, resource, learning support, extra supports are then available to the students who most need this. The special needs co-ordinator will meet the relevant teachers and liaise with outside agencies regarding

students with particular requirements. They also process applications for any resources required.

Information is passed onto the guidance counsellor from primary schools to assess any areas that may cause concern both during the transition to second level education and during their first year in secondary school.

Assessment of Third Year students

In Transition year all students are tested using the DAT. These tests are designed to assess a student's aptitude in certain subject areas. This information is used, together with class and exam test results and teacher feedback to help guide students in their choice of subjects for Leaving Certificate and this is discussed in more detail with them in TY. If they are not doing TY this will happen in Third Year.

Assessments in Senior Cycle

- Information based tests are used to ascertain what level of interest a student may have in a particular career or course choice for the future Career through testing such as interest tests on Qualifax, Careers Portal, CII and CDM.
- Values questionnaires are used to assist students gain more insight into what is important to them in relation to their future.
- Personality profiles allow students develop their self-knowledge.
- Skills, Qualities, Multiple Intelligence tests are done
- Calculating exam results and predicting points for the Leaving Cert

Open Days

As part of the careers programme in the school, all senior students are encouraged to attend open days organised by Third Level institutions. In order to minimise disruption to school life, students will be encouraged to attend any open days arranged on a Saturday. Open days are an opportunity for our students to meet with current students and faculties and to find out what the different institutions can offer them. All sixth year students will attend at the Mid-west careers fair each year, plus LIT/MIC/UL open days which are organised by the guidance department. The attendance at any other open days will vary from year to year depending on demand. Dates for open days are listed in the Events Calendar in Qualifax and the main ones are advertised in Tutor News. The Guidance Counsellor will also tell students in class when certain open days are on but it is their ultimate responsibility to go online, book themselves to go to these events and make their own way there. If they attend an open day during the school week, it is a day of absence and they must bring a note signed from home explaining their absence to reception. Open days or guidance events organised by the guidance team will be announced many time in classes and on the intercom. Students wishing to attend an open day must notify the guidance counsellor and get a permission slip signed from home allowing the student to attend this event. Payment for the bus will also be collected. Lists of all students attending at each open day will be posted on the notice board

in the staff room in advance and given to reception so that names can be inputted into VSWARE for attendance purposes.

Student Planning for Open Days

All students attending at an open day will be required to complete research in advance. This will include:

- Planning their open day using the planning sheet provided by the guidance counsellor
- Visiting the College or University web site
- They are provided with a sheet of relevant questions to ask at open days
- Decide which departments they will visit
- Plan their attendance at lectures/talks. Students will be required to complete a feedback form on their return, to assess the benefit of the visit for any mandatory open days e.g. LIT/MIC and UL for TY.

Study Skills

The guidance counsellor arranges for the delivery of a study skills programme for exam years (third and sixth)

In first year this is delivered through SPHE.

In 2nd and 3rd year the guidance counsellor borrows classes from other teachers where study skills will be delivered. In 2nd and 3rd yr SPHE there is also a module on study skills for their SPHE teacher to deliver.

In 5th year study skills are revisited in guidance class.

In 6th year, study skills are revisited in guidance classes.

All teachers take some responsibility in giving study tips and exam techniques for their own subject to the different classes.

Students can also request an individual study meeting with the Guidance Counsellor.

Positive Mental Health Promotion

- Positive Mental Health week is co-ordinated and promoted in Salesian Secondary College through Guidance, PE, Health, Safety & Hygiene Teachers, SPHE, in conjunction with RE and the student body. It is promoted in a wellbeing framework through those subject areas.
- It is also seen as an integrated entity in all subject areas and is a whole school activity, including students, staff and parents.
- The PCT team organise a Mental Health Day in October each year. TYs are trained to give talks to other year groups using a template from St. Patrick's Mental Health Hospital.
- Activities may include mindfulness, laughing zumba, orienteering, food and health workshops, racism and health, anti-bullying workshops and resilience building. These activities are provided by various departments and teachers in the school.

Encounter Retreats

Day retreats are offered to all sixth year students. This is organised by the RE department.

Special Educational Needs Students

The Guidance service is person centred and this is very obvious in relation to our SEN students. Links have been made with The National Learning Network. In sixth year the guidance counsellor can organise visits for the student and parents to the NLL to suit the need of the student. Students have gone well prepared with suitable questions. Work experience was also organised in the NLL which in turn made access to the course there easier when the time came for some students.

We link in with teachers of SPHE, HSH & RSE where there may be students with SEN who need a Guidance Counsellor to help them understand a concept. The Guidance Counsellor links in with the SEN co-ordinator regularly. She also links in with the primary schools of where SEN students come from so that we have an overall picture of their needs so that we can cater for them.

LGBT Community

The Guidance service is fully supportive of our LGBT community. An open door policy is there for all students to meet with the Guidance Counsellor. Guidance Counsellors have received different in-service and information sessions in this area so that we are fully aware on how to help our students. A student led LGBT society has been set up in the school and is facilitated by a Religion and Art Teacher who have an interest in this area.

Multicultural Awareness

We recognise and are sensitive to cultural and religious differences. We aim to inform ourselves of the traditions and values of our international students, our students who are relatively new to our country and to the travelling community.

Target groups

- Students who are bereaved through death, separation, divorce
- Students at risk, anxiety, depression, self harm
- Non – national students
- Students with special needs
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students who are marginalised in any way
- Gifted students - scholarships

Record Keeping

Record keeping is an integral part of the administration of the guidance and counselling service. The guidance counsellor records counselling sessions and vocational guidance interviews. Notes are stored in secure filing cabinets in the guidance office. Referrals to the DLP are stored securely in the Principal's office. Records of tests and test booklets are also stored in the guidance office. The time and content of phone calls to parents and outside agencies are recorded in an excel sheet on the guidance computer.

Resources

- The guidance office equipped with computer, broadband, printer, telephone, filing cabinets, shelving, desk and comfortable seating.
- Timetabled guidance classes for all senior students are in a computer room
- Powerpoint class material and handouts
- Photocopying facilities shared with all staff
- A guidance library that contains current Irish and U.K. and career related publications.
- A guidance notice board for display of information
- ICT programmes such as Qualifax, Careers Portal, CAO, UCAS, Eunicas and all other guidance programmes available on the internet
- Child Protection Procedures
- Institute of Guidance Counsellor Website and IGC Publications
- IGC annual CPD conference
- NCGE material
- Mid-west IGC Branch meetings and Counselling Supervision
- CAO handbooks
- Aiming Higher publication from UL
- Re-tracking programme
- Anxiety, Anger Management, Self-esteem workbooks as recommended by CAMHS

