



Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey

WHOLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE PLAN

'Our school is a caring, Christian Community in which pupils have the opportunity to achieve academic excellence and to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, creatively, and physically in a healthy environment.'

1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the many different strands of our Whole School Guidance Plan. It also includes a range of resources that are used as part of our overall plan and the targets we aim to achieve over the course of the academic year 2024/2025.

2. Our School

2.1 Loreto Abbey Secondary School, with a student population of 736 girls, offers an educational experience rooted in the core values of Mary Ward (1585 - 1645), the founder of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She saw the amazing potential of all women for involvement in the Church and society. She particularly recognised the importance of education for girls so that they, in her words, could be educated for a praiseworthy Christian life in the world. She proposed that justice, freedom, sincerity, truth and joy be central to the spirituality of a Loreto School; values as pertinent for our time as they were for hers. Our school strives to make these values tangible. With this as our guiding principle we seek to provide an environment in which the full potential of each student can be developed against the background of the Loreto philosophy of education, as outlined in the document "*Continuing the Journey ... A Loreto Education*" and the "*Compass Document*".

2.2 We provide a holistic centred education in which relationships are characterised by respect, honesty, justice, sincerity, courage and compassion. We recognise the importance of faith development and we seek to introduce our students to a reflective way of living. We hope to

provide a supportive environment where every student is encouraged to realise their full potential. Our States examination results reflect the schools' high academic standards and the importance we place on teaching and learning. This however is not the sole focus of our school. We encourage students to participate in a wide ranging co-curricular programme and in so doing nurture their holistic development. Most importantly, we encourage our school community to look outwards and become agents for social change through involvement in initiatives supporting justice.

3. Scope

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

3.2 Guidance in second level schools refers to 'a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives' (DES, 2005, pg. 4.).

3.3 This definition highlights the holistic nature of Guidance in supporting students' personal, social, educational and career development and the important role Guidance plays in facilitating decision making and life choices, and in promoting and supporting students' well-being (NCGE, 2017, Whole School Guidance Framework, pg. 7).

3.4 This plan addresses the Guidance needs of all our students throughout their journey at Loreto Abbey. We do so, using the continuum of support model (NEPS 2010, 2013), which aims to meet the needs of students through 'Guidance for All', 'Guidance for Some' and 'Guidance for Few' (NCGE, 2017).

4. Rationale

4.1 Circular 0010/2017 states that Guidance is a whole school activity where each school collaboratively develops a Whole School Guidance plan as a means of supporting the needs of students. At Loreto Abbey, each member of staff recognises and ensures that guidance permeates every aspect of school life. Our Whole School Guidance Plan outlines the school's approach to guidance generally and how students are supported and assisted in making choices and successful transitions in the personal and social, educational and career areas of their lives.

4.2 This plan will also distinguish between the competencies available within the school to help support students through various situations and where referral to outside agencies is deemed necessary.

4.3 Additionally, in line with "Action 9.1 in Action Plan for Education 2017" the Whole School Guidance Plan will "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".

5. Philosophy and Mission Statement

5.1 The Whole School Guidance Plan has been drawn up in the context of Loreto Abbey's mission statement and reflects the school's commitment to creating a caring, Christian community in which pupils can achieve academic excellence and to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, creatively, and physically in a healthy environment.

5.2 The whole community, staff, pupils and parents, endeavour to renew and affirm each other by:

- Sharing a common mission and vision
- Working in collaboration
- Giving inspiration, support, and encouragement
- Showing respect; courtesy; care; consideration; appreciation; tolerance; friendship and loyalty.

6. Objectives

- To encourage students to have confidence in themselves through appropriate affirmation of their actions and abilities.
- To promote a sense of belonging, providing an environment where the full potential of the student can be developed.
- To include all students, regardless of ability in school activities.
- To understand the personal difficulties encountered by our students and the implication of these difficulties on their lives.
- To encourage students and their parents to have realistic goals and expectations.
- To promote self-respect for others.
- To challenge students to recognise injustice and to respond in a positive way.

7. Content of the Plan

7.1 This Whole School Guidance Plan is divided under the following sections as follows,

- **What is School Guidance?**
- **Aims of the Guidance Programme**
- **The Whole School Guidance Programme**
- **Whole School Guidance Provision**
- **Procedure for identifying a student with Additional Educational Needs**
- **Whole School Guidance Links**
- **Policies relating to Whole School Guidance**
- **Areas for Development 2024/25**
- **Guidance Resources – Appendices**

8. Members of the Whole School Guidance Team

Mr Robert Dunne (Principal)
Ms Marie Breen (Deputy Principal)
Ms Gráinne Byrne (Deputy Principal)
Mr Will Flanagan (Acting Deputy Principal)
Ms Dara Shortt (Guidance Counsellor)
Ms Orla Brophy (Guidance Counsellor)
Ms Roisin Conlon (AEN Coordinator)
Mr Bernard O'Boyle (Year Head to 5th Year)
Ms Colette NíGhallchóir (Year Head to 1st Year)
Ms Emily Scully (Wellbeing Coordinator)
Sr Mary Delahunty (Chaplain)
Mr Stephen Cahill (Physical Education Coordinator)
Mr Eoin Hughes (Digital Coordinator)
Mr Micheal Murphy (Exams Coordinator)
Mr Patrick Byrne (R.E & S.P.H.E Department)
Ms Patricia Quinn (R.E & S.P.H.E Department)

8.1 Additionally, support and input has been given by the following:

Year Heads
Class Tutors
Wellbeing Subject Departments

8.2 The Guidance Plan reflects this teamwork.

9. What is School Guidance?

9.1 In this plan, the term guidance will be used to refer to all guidance and counselling activities and student support services within the school. Guidance in schools 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 consequent to these choices” (NCGE, 2004). The Whole School Guidance Plan addresses the full range of activities through which the school responds to the needs of students. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked areas of:

Personal & Social	Developing Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and maintaining self-esteem & a positive self-concept • Interacting effectively with others (face to face & online) • Developing and growing throughout life
Educational	Developing My Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing effective personal learning/ exam strategies • Making educational choices in line with career aspirations
Vocational/Career	Developing My Career Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using career related information & sources appropriately • Understanding the world of work & life roles • Managing career development and decision making

10. Guidance activities that assist students to make informed choices include:

10.1 **Counselling:** providing students with a safe, non-judgemental environment within which they can explore their thoughts and feelings in the areas of personal and social, educational and career development and at moments of personal crisis. Through this we endeavour to teach students to be responsible for their own behaviour and actions and show them that there is choice in everything that they do. All guidance counselling takes place in line with our Confidentiality Policy.

10.2 **Assessment:** Psychometric tests are used as a tool to track student progress throughout their academic journey. They also help to facilitate educational and career decision making and personal development; and to support learning and educational choices. Please refer to our Psychometric Assessment Policy 2020.

10.3 **Information:** providing students with factual and up to date information on educational and occupational opportunities, whilst teaching them how to interpret and use this information accordingly.

10.4 Developmental Programmes: Guidance learning and developmental programmes relating to personal and social, educational and career development is provided to individuals, groups and within classroom settings. This information will be facilitated through a Whole School Guidance approach, therefore encompassing the entire Loreto Abbey staff in the planning, leading, delivery, review, and evaluation of the Guidance service/ programme.

10.5 Referrals:

10.5.1 Within the school context we have three types of referrals:

- Students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor or our school's Psychotherapist (who is with us one day per week) by a teacher, Year Head, school management; the student support team or by a parent/ guardian.
- Students may self-refer.
- Referrals to external agencies and professionals as appropriate

11. Aims of the Guidance Programme:

11.1 The guidance programme in Loreto Abbey aims to:

- Be inclusive, providing for the needs of all students – junior, senior, international, special educational needs – the entire spectrum from those needing learning support to the exceptionally able.
- Develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities.
- Assist students in the development of positive self-esteem thereby helping them to live full and fruitful lives.
- Provide support for learners to enable them to make wise and informed personal, educational and career choices.
- Help students explore the career options available to them whilst considering their interests, strengths, and aptitudes.
- Equip students with the skills they need to research and explore the various career options available to them.
- Provide students with appropriate support in times of difficulty, crisis, and trauma.
- Facilitate their integration into the school community through various peer related activities.

- Identify students at risk and put in place appropriate strategies to help them deal with the difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Provide where possible appropriate support for parents and guardians where such support is deemed necessary.
- To ensure that the guidance service acts within ethical and legal requirements. In all areas of personal support, students are assured of confidentiality except where there is a concern that the student may self-harm or harm someone else. In such circumstances the appropriate professionals, agencies or authorities are informed. Students are made aware of such conditions. (Refer to Confidentiality Policy)

11.2 **Guidance Counsellors**

Ms Dara Shortt
Ms Orla Brophy

11.3 **Number of hours allocated for Guidance** 44 Hours

11.4 **Current Resources**

11.4.1 The guidance area contains two offices, two laptop computers, and two iPads. A budget administered by the Guidance Counsellors is provided by the Board of Management annually. Notice Boards highlighting key events and timelines. A small College/Careers information library is located beside the two Guidance offices. There is a Guidance section on the school website, which is updated at different stages throughout the year. It also contains information on upcoming College Open Days; this information is fed in from Careers Portal, which ensures it is relevant and timely.

12. **Key Student Support Personnel**

Student Support Team (Ref. Student Support Policy)

12.1 **The Student Support Team**

The Student Support Team meets with the Principal/ Deputy Principal on a weekly basis to discuss concerns regarding individual students or groups of students which have been brought to their attention. Here the team develops an appropriate response for each concern. This may involve providing in-school support for the students or deciding in consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s), that external help is required.

12.2 Year Head

- Year Heads have both a pastoral and disciplinary role.
- Have access to information on all students in their Year Groups. They survey reports and track academic progress.
- The role of the Year Head in relation to behavioural matters is outlined in the Code of Behaviour.
- Encourage good behaviour through regular contact with Year Groups – Assemblies and classroom visits.
- Liaise with student representatives in the Year Group.
- Promote significant participation of the Year Group in key ethos days of the school.
- Available to meet with parents.
- Available to meet with students regarding both pastoral and disciplinary matters.
- *Junior Level Year Heads* – organise a Prize Giving Ceremony for their Year Group to acknowledge and reward the participation of students in school life.

Year Heads:

Aisling Green

Bernard O'Boyle

Marie Lonergan

Aisling Mooney (Acting)

Therese Ryan & Joanne McBreen

Colette Ni Ghallchoir

12.3 Class Tutors

12.3.1 Class Tutors are appointed for all classes.

- A tutor is a teacher who, on behalf of the school community, undertakes the role of caring for a particular class group with responsibility in the pastoral and academic areas. This role is undertaken in a voluntary capacity.
- The tutor should be a class teacher for the class for which she/he has responsibility.
- Involved in induction programmes where appropriate.

- Have a pastoral rather than a disciplinary role and are given information on the students within their group by the Year Head as deemed necessary.
- Promote class spirit and cohesion.
- Encourage leadership qualities within a class group.
- Oversee the student journal and monitor notes for absences.
- Encourage class involvement in all activities that promote the ethos of the school.
- Meet as a group with their Year Head at least twice a term during school time.
- Given opportunities to engage in professional development programmes.

12.4 Mentors

12.4.1 All 5th and 6th Year students have the option to be assigned an academic mentor.

12.4.2 Mentors will generally teach a student and will meet her at least once per term or more often on request.

12.4.3 The mentor will review academic results and progress, and will advise on study habits. S/he will liaise with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head and Guidance Counsellors where appropriate.

5th Year Mentors

Mr R. Dunne
 Ms G. Byrne
 Mr W. Flanagan
 Ms P. Jordan
 Ms L. Segrave Daly
 Ms A. Freyne
 Ms A. Mooney
 Mr C. Curtis

6th Year Mentors

Mr Dunne
 Ms G. Byrne
 Ms A. Green
 Mr D. Cullen
 Ms K. Mulcahy
 Ms A. McHenry
 Mr O. Hughes
 Ms M. Gageby
 Mr E. Murphy
 Ms P. Quinn
 Ms A. Farrelly
 Ms C. O'Dwyer
 Ms L. Brennan
 Mr N. Oman
 Mr C. Thompson
 Mr P. Byrne

12.5 Additional Personnel

12.5.1 All other staff members within Loreto Abbey recognise their role within the Whole School Guidance Framework. We refer here specifically to our Sports Coaches and extra-curricular staff:

Sports Coordinator:

Ms Jane Coyne

PE Teachers:

Mr Stephen Cahill

Mr Darragh Monaghan

Mr Shane Walsh

Sports Hall Manager:

Ms Ciara Leech

Hockey Coaches:

Mr West Thornton

Ms Ella Curtis

Ms Lucy Wall

Ms Trish Mountjoy

Mr Rob Devlin

Ms Sue Shirley

Ms Liz McEvoy

Ms Iona O'Sullivan

Basketball Coaches:

Mr Stephen Cahill

Mr Deryck Payne

Mr Roy Harper

Ms Sarah Dunne

Ms Ciara Dunne

Ms Ailbhe Ryan

Ms Caoimhe McWilliams

GAA Coaches:

Mr Darragh Monaghan

Mr Shane Walsh

Soccer Coach:

Mr Jack Collins - Soccer Coach

13. The Whole School Guidance Programme

13.1 The guidance programme is delivered both formally and informally.

13.2 **Formal Guidance** refers to guidance, which is delivered using two forms of intervention, using a variety of methodologies:

1. One to one meetings with the Guidance Counsellor for personal, social and educational or career guidance (Guidance for Some and Few).
2. Classroom guidance, which is delivered through regular weekly classes, through a range of subject areas (Guidance for All).

13.3 **Informal Guidance** consists of liaising with other teachers/management to promote cross curricular links and to enhance the development of Whole School Guidance as a whole. Meetings with parents/ guardians and outside agencies help form an integral part of this informal guidance.

14. The Whole School Guidance Programme at Loreto Abbey is divided into two key areas: Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle.

14.1 At **Junior Cycle**, the Whole School Guidance Programme aims to ease the transition from primary to secondary school. We aim to ensure that personal or learning difficulties are detected as early as possible. We recognise the importance of students making friends and bonding with their class group and year group. We value and encourage student engagement both academically and socially within the school, drawing on individuals strengths and gifts; whilst developing and discovering new talents and interests students never even knew existed.

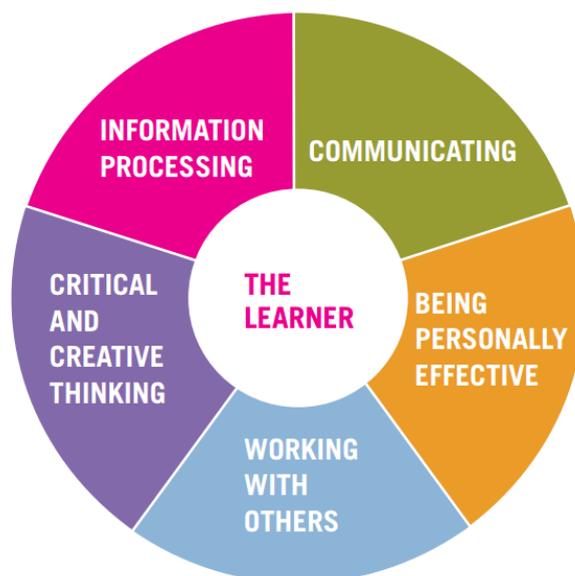
14.1.1 Through a variety of subjects, students will begin to develop key skills and knowledge that will help them to navigate the many challenges that they may encounter in today's world. The curriculum will also support students in learning how to learn, and teach them to take responsibility for their own learning. ([Framework for Junior Cycle | NCCA](#))



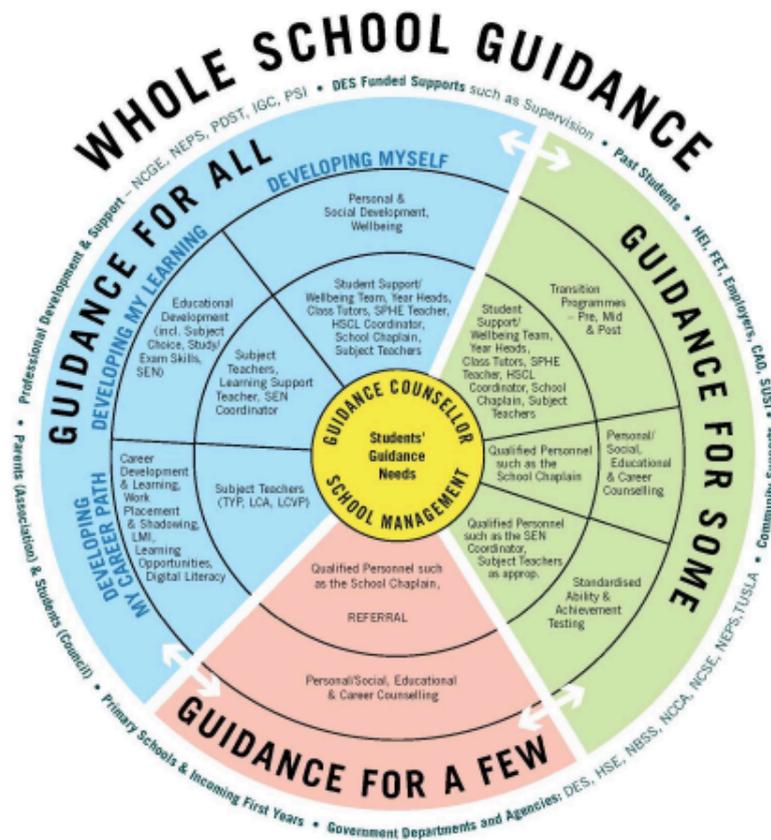
14.1.2 Students will be encouraged to establish good study habits and time management strategies which will in turn lead to good self-management and discipline.

14.2 At **Senior Cycle**, the Whole School Guidance Programme centres on the formation of young women who will go out into the world with a true sense of self, knowing their true potential and their values.

14.2.1 Students will continue to build on skills that will give them the “ability to think critically and creatively, innovate and adapt to change, to work independently and in a team, and to be a reflective learner. These skills are prerequisites for life and for the workplace in the 21st century”(NCCA, Key Skills Framework, Senior Cycle, January 2009).



15. Whole School Guidance Wheel



15.1. The Whole School Guidance Wheel is taken from the NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework, which was published by the NCGE in June 2017:
[Career Development & Learning Framework to support the Whole School Guidance Programme](#) (See page 15)

15.2 Note

The listings of school programmes and staff in the above image is not meant to be exhaustive i.e. school programmes/staff involved in whole school guidance will vary across schools. The image of the Wheel is intended to highlight programmes / staff who may be involved in the delivery of a Whole School Guidance Programme.

16. Whole School Guidance Provision

16.1 This section will begin by addressing the Whole School Guidance activities for all year groups as a whole; it will then proceed to examine each year group individually under the three separate, but interlinked areas of:

<i>Personal & Social</i>	Developing Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and maintaining self-esteem & a positive self-concept • Interacting effectively with others (face to face & online) • Developing and growing throughout life
<i>Educational</i>	Developing My Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing effective personal learning/ exam strategies • Making educational choices in line with career aspirations
<i>Vocational/Career</i>	Developing My Career Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using career related information & sources appropriately • Understanding the world of work & life roles • Managing career development and decision making

17. All Year Groups

17.1 **The Student Support System** deals with all learning or emotional issues that arise within the school. This highly effective system includes class tutors, Year Heads, the Student Support Team, the Guidance Counsellors, the chaplain, the AEN Department, and school management. The Student Support Team meets for one hour each week. Anything appropriate is then fed into the Assistant Principals Meeting which also takes place on a weekly basis.

17.2 All students can avail of one-to-one **Guidance Counselling meetings** with a Guidance Counsellor. Students can self-refer; they can also be referred by their Year Head, a member of the student support team, or a parent/guardian. The Guidance Counsellors are also available to speak with parents/guardians upon request.

17.3 **Year Heads** liaise with parents/guardians, subject teachers, class tutors, Guidance Counsellors, and management to address any issues of concern regarding an individual or groups of students.

17.4 **Referrals** are made to outside agencies or our school Psychotherapist when a student requires specialised counselling or treatment in a specific area.

17.5 **Group assemblies** are conducted throughout the year with all Year Groups when deemed necessary. They are an opportunity to meet with Year Groups as a whole and to communicate

with them face to face. It provides an occasion to reinforce positive behaviour, to reflect on school ethos, to provide whole school feedback to groups and to highlight all the activities that are taking place for those students.

17.6 **Anti-bullying surveys** are conducted once a term. However, if the need arises these surveys can be done outside of these times. On our school website through the 'Contact Us' tab, students have access to an **Anti-Bullying Hotline**. This provides students with a safe space to alert school management to bullying that they may be either experiencing or perhaps they were witness to.

17.7 **Guest speakers** are organised by the Parents Association for all parents regarding key issues pertaining to the wellbeing of students. The Guidance department organises information seminars, which are often facilitated by outside speakers on topics pertaining to college and university courses and specific careers. The TY Coordinator and subject teachers organise speakers over the course of the year related to their areas of expertise.

17.8 Students are encouraged to get involved in the numerous activities that take place throughout the school in relation to **positive mental health**. Examples include 'Mind Your Mind Week', 'Safer Internet Day', and 'Stand Up Awareness Week'. In addition, there is a huge emphasis placed on physical activity throughout the school, from yoga, to tennis, to hockey; there is something to suit everybody's needs and physical abilities. This physical activity culminates as we come close to the end of each academic year with 'Spirit Day'. This is a day that embodies the spirit and ethos of Loreto Abbey, where the community as a whole comes together to celebrate and enjoy a range of activities. This extravaganza is run and led by the Student Council with the support and guidance of our sports coordinator.

17.9 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Year groups have one period per week of **Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)** is a module within SPHE which consists of a minimum of 6 classes per year. RSE for 4th, 5th and 6th Year students is covered in RE class. Details of the content can be found in the SPHE Policy, on the school website.

17.10 The **SPHE Support Group** is a student committee made up of approximately 15 students from TY, 5th and 6th Year. They work alongside the SPHE teachers throughout the year to organise events and initiatives to address issues they feel are affecting students in our school. The group works together to create a happy and safe environment within the school by acting as a link between the student body and the staff. Some past events include Mind Your Mind Week, Stand Up Awareness Week, information workshops for our anti-bullying ambassadors (Amigas), Movie Nights for Junior Year Groups, Online Safety Workshops, and Alcohol Awareness Workshops. Students volunteer as Digital Champions within the SPHE area. Digital workshops are provided to develop skills and knowledge for this cohort.

17.11 All students are offered two one hour periods of **Religious Education** per week. In the first three years, we follow the exam syllabus (Junior Cycle) and the new subject specifications (Junior Cycle) as set out by the NCCA. In Senior Cycle, students engage in a broad programme of study that is designed to allow students to explore questions around faith, worship, morality

and their place in the world. Over the two years of Senior Cycle, students work through various modules based around topics such as Personal Spirituality, Religion and Gender, Morality and the study of major World Religions. 5th and 6th Year RE classes are blocked to facilitate guest speakers and group preparation for liturgies.

17.12 Each year, a group of 5th Year students volunteer to be part of the **Justice and Peace group**. Students meet on a weekly basis. The vision of the group comes from the Loreto ethos and Mary Ward. It is rooted in the Gospel message: justice, peace and integrity of creation. They plan awareness campaigns on such issues as women's rights to education throughout the world, human trafficking, the needs of our sister school in Rumbek and homelessness. Fundraising is an important part of their work, which in itself is a great learning process. They fundraise for causes such as St Vincent de Paul and provide children in Direct Provision with Christmas gifts.

17.13 1st to 3rd Year students receive two periods of **Physical Education (PE)** per week; TY students have a double period and both 5th and 6th Year students have one class each. Students develop skills in the wide range of sporting activities offered; therefore enabling lifelong participation within sport. They are also given the opportunity to perform in the role of a coach as well as a performer which further supports their holistic development.

17.14 Students are encouraged to become active members of Loreto Abbey's vibrant school community through an extensive range of **extracurricular activities**. There are a large number of clubs and societies in existence throughout the school. If for whatever reason a student struggles however to find something that appeals to them, they are encouraged to establish a new club to address their interests.

17.15 "**Dalkey's Got Talent**" plays a significant role in the personal and social development of our students at Loreto Abbey. It is an opportunity for students to participate and support the talent that is encapsulated within our school, while at the same time looking out-wards to raise much needed funds for our sister school in Rumbek. This event is run and produced by the Student Council. Some of the winners of previous shows have gone on to focus on music careers. This production encourages a deep sense of gratitude within the student body and the staff for the gifts and talents of the school community.

17.16 In autumn 2019, Loreto Abbey students were recognised for their volunteerism by being awarded the **Volunteer of All Award** by *Localise*, an organisation supported by The Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs. The students created their own volunteer charter which sets out their rights and responsibilities and volunteers. A school wide survey was also undertaken to determine the level of volunteering taking place among the student body. This survey produced very favourable results showing that many students volunteer at home, in their communities, with the elderly, with sports clubs and youth projects.

17.17 **Parent teacher meetings** take place once a year for all Year Groups. At Junior Cycle level, these meetings are for the parents/guardians alone; however, in 5th and 6th Year students are encouraged to accompany parents/guardians to these meetings so as they can actively engage in these informative and self-reflective meetings.

17.18 All senior cycle students are offered the opportunity to engage with a period of reflection each year. These opportunities are facilitated by a combination of the school's Religious Education Department and outside organisations. Transition Year students are offered an Ignatian Spirituality morning facilitated by the Loreto Prayer Ministry Team. Our Junior Cycle students are offered reflection opportunities; and these again are facilitated both within the school and some are outside of school.

17.19 The **Student Council** is composed of an elected group of student's representative of all years. The Council meets regularly and seeks to give a voice to the student body. Members of the Council need to be able to communicate with their classmates so as to represent their views on issues affecting them. The Student Council is consulted on school policy and therefore members develop an understanding on the wider running of the school community. They are very involved in the development of school Spirit and organise events such as 'Dalkey's Got Talent' and Spirit Day. Through these events, members develop many personal life skills and become more aware of the world around them.

17.20 **Y.E.S. (Young Entrepreneur Scheme):** Students from 1st and 2nd Year, along with students from TY are encouraged to get involved in the Young Entrepreneur Scheme and run their own business. Not only does it allow students a chance to gain some invaluable business experience but also affords them the opportunity to develop skills such as decision making, teamwork, communication and organisation. This programme is run outside of the classroom setting as an extracurricular activity and is open to all students from the designated years regardless of whether they study Business Studies as part of their overall timetable.

17.21 **Subject Teachers** are vigilant and aware of the students that are in their care. While their primary role is concerned with the education and safety of the students that are in front of them, their nurturing and mentoring relationship of students is strongly evident within our Whole School Guidance system. Examples of this can be seen with both formal and informal referrals of students to the Student Support Team, the Guidance Counsellors or even to a student's Year Head or official mentor (for senior students only).

18. Incoming First Year Students:

18.1 An **Annual Open Evening** takes place once a year for potential incoming students to experience the atmosphere of Loreto Abbey Dalkey. During this Open Evening teachers are available to speak with parents regarding their specific subjects or the needs of individual students. Parents attend a presentation by the Principal on the Characteristic Spirit of the School. Many students play an active part in this evening by showing small groups of parents and children around the school. Interacting and answering questions on life in the Loreto Abbey School Community.

18.2 Two information meetings are held for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of 1st Years in the months prior to September of their year of entry. The first meeting focuses on providing practical information on ethos, curriculum and procedures. The second meeting is a practical presentation on our iPad programme.

18.3 The incoming 1st Year students arrive at school in May for a **“get to know you session”**, prior to their September start. All students come together to make new friends and to work on small team building tasks. This is a great way for students and staff to get to know each other before the academic year begins.

18.4 The Deputy Principal and our AEN Co-ordinator arrange **visits to feeder schools**. This is an opportunity to gain insight into the individual needs of students and to help ease the transition to secondary school.

18.5 **Students with additional educational needs** are invited into the school for a short ‘meet and greet’ and school tour in May prior to commencing at Loreto Abbey. Transitional programmes are set up for students where appropriate, this involves school visits.

19. First Year

19.1 Personal and Social Guidance

19.1.2 1st Year students begin the new academic year, by allowing them the opportunity to focus on:

- Familiarisation with their new school environment
- Distribution and explanation of timetables
- Introduction to pastoral care service
- Introduction to guidance service
- Meeting with all subject teachers

19.1.3 1st Year induction takes place over the first number of weeks of the new academic year.

19.1.4 Each 1st Year student is paired with a 6th Year ‘Cara’. This Senior student acts as a mentor to the new 1st Year student. Events are organised throughout the year for the 1st Year girls and their ‘Caras’.

19.1.5 Two information evenings are held for parents of 1st Year students in early September. The first meeting provides practical information to parents on easing the transition for their daughters from primary to secondary school. The second meeting looks at educating parents on the use of iPads within the classroom and the need for stringent rules and regulations around its use within the school and at home. In a practical, hands-on workshop setting, Parents/Guardians attend with their daughter’s iPad and learn how to set Parental Controls, Restrictions and also view and set screen time limits. Parents/Guardians are also given some

elementary training in the use of the iPad so that they can best support their daughter's use of their device in an educational context.

19.1.6 A comprehensive set of resources are forwarded to parents/guardians after the event, including videos and support documents from Apple and a summary and practical instructions of the topics discussed at the evening workshop; these are produced by the Digital Learning Coordinator. As software is updated every year, the newly updated resources are also forwarded to the parents/guardians of other years groups at this time.

19.1.7 Small group and individual meetings, where necessary, are held with students and the Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain throughout the year to discuss their transition to secondary school and moving from 1st Year into 2nd Year.

19.2 Educational Guidance

19.2.1 Each student brings with them their Educational Passport from their Primary School. This passport supports the sharing of relevant data, including assessment results, as students transfer from primary to post-primary school. The **Education Passport** materials support a 3-phase process to the transfer of pupil information from primary to post-primary schools <https://ncca.ie/en/primary/reporting-and-transfer/education-passport>. (see Appendix 1)

19.2.2 1st Year students complete Cognitive Ability Testing in the first term. This is used as a tool to monitor student's academic performance over the course of their education at Loreto Abbey. It also helps to identify students who may require additional learning support.

19.2.3 As part of the **school's Wellbeing Programme** 1st Year students receive two periods of Physical Education (PE) per week. They also have one hour SPHE class per week and one hour of CSPE. These classes are designed **to develop the social, personal and educational development of each student.**

19.2.4 In addition to this all 1st Year students engage in three ten week module courses. This involves Guidance Learning , Digital Literacy and Choir. The rationale for their inclusion in the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Programme and the learnings they address is clearly outlined in the Planning Document for Shorter Units of Learning (Appendix I of NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines). These documents are in a Wellbeing folder on the Drive, which is accessible to management and all teachers of Wellbeing subjects and modules (it is not public). Each module is linked to the six wellbeing indicators: Being Aware, Responsible, Connected, Active, Resilient and Respected. Students complete some form of assessment in each module for example, presentations, reflections, a performance or a project.

19.3 Vocational /Career Guidance

19.3.1 All 1st Year students participate in a ten week *Guidance Learning* module. This module is part of the wellbeing programme delivered by the Guidance Counsellors. Students explore

topics that are linked with life skills in a fun, creative way. They also link their values and strengths to the world of work and the careers they may wish to pursue in the future.

19.3.2 Cross curricular links are made with Career Guidance at different times throughout the year, for example Science Week.

20. Second Year:

20.1 Personal and Social Guidance

20.1.1 Continuing development of self-knowledge, personality, qualities and individual potential through SPHE and RE programmes.

20.2 Educational Guidance

20.2.1 All 2nd Year students continue to engage with their core wellbeing subjects which focus on building upon the 'Six Indicators of Wellbeing'. This includes one class of Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE); one class of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and two periods of Physical Education (PE). These are incorporated into the students main timetable.

20.3 Vocational/Career Guidance

20.3.1 All 2nd Year students will take part in our Careers 'World Cafe Event', this will take place with our 6th Year students, who will facilitate these conversations. They will also engage with the 'Day in My Life' programme, which will take place in April or early May each year.



https://www.ncca.ie/media/2487/wellbeingguidelines_forjunior_cycle.pdf

21. Third Year:

21.1 Personal and Social Guidance

- Continuing development of self-knowledge, personality, qualities and individual potential through SPHE and RE programmes.

21.2 Educational Guidance

21.2.1 Wellbeing continues to be an important component of the 3rd Year syllabus. Every student has one period of Physical Education (PE); one period of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE).

21.2.2 Although optional in Loreto Abbey, the vast majority of 3rd Year students choose to do Transition Year, with a very small minority moving on to 5th Year. The Transition Year coordinator gives a presentation on the TY programme to all 3rd Year students and parents during the second term of 3rd Year. Students wishing to participate in Transition Year are required to complete an application form.

21.3 Vocational/Career Guidance

21.3.1 All 3rd Year students will have the opportunity to engage with the activities that take place in relation to Science Week. They will also experience the 'Day in My Life' programme during April or early May. This takes place with the cooperation of our students' parents and guardians.

24. Fourth Year / Transition Year:

24.1 Personal and Social Guidance

24.1.1 The role of Class Tutor is a vital part of monitoring the progress and development of all TY students within each teachers care. All tutor groups are assigned a specific teacher with whom they have a one hour period per week for the academic year. This is an opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences by completing video diaries, learning reports and being involved in group and individual conversations with their tutor. Weekly challenges are submitted by students to their tutor which engages them in thought provoking mental and physical activities each week. The pastoral care element of this session allows for improved communication between the students, their tutor, TY coordinator, Year Head and parents.

24.1.2 Topics such as decision making skills, personal development, taking responsibility for one's choices, are just some of the examples of areas that are addressed throughout a range of different classes in 4th Year.

24.1.3 The TY Musical/Performing Arts Module provides an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in the creative process in the areas of drama, music, dance, set design, costumes and make-up and all other aspects associated with the production of a fully-staged musical. It develops the kinaesthetic and interpersonal intelligences and encourages communication and teamwork as well as building self-confidence and pride in the students' own abilities.

24.1.4 Philanthropy in TY Religion:

One of the main aims of the TY Religion programme looks at how we can positively impact the world we live in and uphold the traditional Christian values of being of service to others. In TY Religion all students take part in a week long community care programme where they work with various community based organisations working within their local area. TY Religion classes also carry out vital work for St. Vincent de Paul in the run up to Christmas and other organisations throughout the year.

24.1.5 Transition Year students are exposed to a number of sporting activities that are not typically part of a PE programme such as lacrosse, UCD Schools Dance event, cricket, self-defence, fencing and bowling. Students are scheduled for one double period of PE per week.

24.1.6 Exchange Programme: Sixteen students get the opportunity to engage with an exchange programme which sees girls going to Seville and a number of other countries, to live with host families for a short period of time. During this experience, they attend school alongside the host family's child.

24.1.7 Loreto Abbey is also a host to many girls from countries such as Spain, France, Germany and Mexico. These exchanges have a profound effect on students both at home and abroad, by exposing them to new cultures and seeing how life is lived both in and outside of Ireland, while at the same time developing their language skills.

24.1.8 The Transition Year Graduation Ceremony takes place at the end of the academic year. This is an opportunity for students and their parents to gather alongside the Transition Year team and school management to celebrate the end of this very special year. This ceremony showcases all that is good about Transition Year and highlights the many successes of its students.

24.2 Educational Guidance

24.2.1 Transition Year students engage with new subjects which they may not have previously experienced until now. Examples of these include Cultural Studies, Politics, Sign Language, Finance, Art, Home Economics, Enterprise and Music. Whilst core subjects continue to be taught throughout the year, they are approached in a way that allows both the teacher and

their students to veer from the main syllabus in order to get a broader, and perhaps a deeper appreciation of these topics.

24.2.2 All students complete the 'My Eirquest' and 'My Aptitude' assessment during November of Transition Year; this measures both aptitude and career interest, helping students to gain a deeper understanding of their strengths. This assessment assists students in making their subject choices for 5th Year, while at the same time suggesting careers that they may be interested in investigating further, based on their strengths that were highlighted through the assessment process.

24.2.3 A subject option evening takes place in January / February for all Transition Year students and their parents/guardians. All subject teachers and Guidance Counsellors attend this evening and are available to speak with students and their parents regarding their specific areas of expertise.

24.3 Vocational / Career Guidance

24.3.1 All 4th Year classes have one timetabled period of 'World of Work' per week. A sample of content from the World of Work module includes:

- Career Awareness
- Career Skills
- Career Sector Investigation
- My Talents
- Personal & Career Values
- Career Interest Profile
- TY Work Experience and CV Builder

24.3.2 In September of each year our TY students attend the World Skills Exhibition in the RDS. This is a unique opportunity for our students to learn and experience all the different skill-based career options available in Ireland. Special attention is paid to apprenticeship programmes and other alternative training routes including Higher Education and Solas programmes.

24.3.3 One of the many important elements of TY is the two weeks of work placement that each student is obliged to complete throughout the course of the year. This can be a significant learning experience for many students, giving them true insight into the world of work. In addition students have a one week 'Community Placement', where they are encouraged to volunteer within some area of their local community. Students engage with reflective journals and video diaries throughout these experiences.

24.3.4 Several college and career talks are arranged for all students within Transition Year at different times throughout the year. They also engage with the 'Day in My Life Programme' with our 2nd Year students.

24.3.5 Students will visit at least one college campus accompanied by the Guidance Counsellors.

24.3.6 'Law Day' takes place in January. Students have an opportunity to learn about Irish law, real court cases and take part in a mock trial.

24.3.7 A College/ Careers Fair takes place in Loreto Abbey in late April for all Senior students (4th, 5th and 6th Years). This is an opportunity for our senior level students to seek information from local college and university representatives.

24.4.4 **Leadership conversations**

24.4.5 The "Leadership Conversations" programme for Transition Year students began in 2015 in Loreto Abbey. It encompasses regular sessions with Irish women from different walks of life who have achieved significant success in their field and made a difference. The programme was the idea of two women who had daughters starting in Transition Year. Their original proposal is outlined here:

'In today's world our girls are subjected to much peer pressure and it is not always acceptable to stand out from the crowd – to stand up for what is right – to strive to make a difference in society – instead the pressure is very much to comply with peers, to fit in and absolutely not stand out. Yet these girls have more opportunities than any other generation to make a difference in Ireland and in the world – with modern technology they can spread a powerful message and we can help them. We have a fantastic resource of Irish women who have achieved something great either in Ireland or further afield and have made a difference through the work they do –women who were once 16 year old girls going to school just like our girls' – Geraldine Murphy & Elaine Lyons, Transition Year Parents 2015

24.4.6 Speakers are asked to talk the students through their journey so far – what barriers they had to overcome, what helped them, what they would do differently, what advice they might give to their 16 year old self etc. It is hoped that these talks will inspire the girls to believe that, with hard work and commitment, their goals are achievable and they too can make a difference and be leaders of the next generation.

24.4.7 A 'Leadership Conversations Student Committee' is formed at the beginning of each academic year. These volunteers meet each speaker on her arrival to the school, introduce her to their classmates in the lecture theatre and thank her after the talk.

25. Fifth Year

25.1 Personal and Social Guidance

25.1.1 Personal and social guidance issues are addressed during formal class contact time in conjunction with RE and SPHE classes specifically. It is also addressed through the Tutor and Year Head system both officially and unofficially.

Subject teachers are also very conscious of the personal and social development of their students and endeavour to provide students with support to make the transition to Senior Cycle.

25.1.2 Each 5th Year student is offered the opportunity to take part in a spiritual and reflective journey that takes place along the *Camino de Santiago* at the beginning of June. During this time students will trek for seven days from Sarria to Santiago, carrying with them the bare essentials needed for this journey. In the lead up to this pilgrimage, students will undertake six weeks of training to ensure they are both physically and mentally fit for the journey.

25.2 Educational Guidance

25.2.1 All 5th Year students have the opportunity to avail of support from mentors. Students will have a good working relationship with the teachers that are assigned to them. Meetings can take place a number of times throughout the year at the request of the student. The primary function of this mentoring relationship is educational; however, this can often flow into personal and social guidance at a low level, and if necessary, referrals are made to management or the Guidance Counsellors.

25.2.2 Study Skills Workshops are held for 5th Year students at the start of each academic year.

25.3 Vocational / Career Guidance

25.3.1 5th Year students are timetabled for a one period of Career Guidance for ten weeks.

25.3.2 Individual Career Guidance meetings become mandatory in 5th Year with each student having a minimum of one, one to one meeting with a Guidance Counsellor.

25.3.4 A number of general college talks are arranged to give students a broad overview of specific college courses on offer. These take place as part of our 'Lunchtime Talks' series throughout the year. The majority of these talks will take place between September and December.

25.3.5 Details of College Open Days are communicated through the Guidance section of the school website. All senior students are encouraged to attend where appropriate and relevant.

25.3.6 The Higher Options College and Careers Fair takes place in September of each year in the RDS. 5th Year students attend this, accompanied by their Guidance Counsellors.

25.3.7 A College/ Careers Fair takes place in Loreto Abbey in December for all senior students (4th, 5th and 6th Years). This is an opportunity for our current senior level students to seek information from colleges and universities throughout the country.

26. Sixth Year

26.1 Personal and Social Guidance

26.1.1 Personal and Social Guidance issues are addressed during formal class contact time in conjunction with RE and SPHE classes specifically. However, this is also addressed through the Tutor and Year Head system both officially and unofficially. Subject teachers are very conscious of the personal and social development of their students and as such are highly vigilant of the students in their care.

26.1.2 The 6th Year Graduation Mass takes place in May for the students and their parents/guardians and is also attended by staff, including the Guidance Counsellors. It is an opportunity for students and their families to meet with those who have played a part in their daughter's educational and personal development over the last six years.

26.2 Educational Guidance

26.2.1 Mentors are available to all 6th Year students. These meetings take place at the request of the student. The primary function of this mentoring relationship is educational; however, this can often flow into personal and social guidance at a low level, and if necessary, referrals are made to management or the Guidance Counsellors.

26.2.2 Study Skills Workshops are held for 6th Year students at the start of each academic year.

26.2.3 6th Year students will have the opportunity to speak with their Guidance Counsellor and their teachers following their Leaving Certificate results in August for guidance and support if required.

26.3 Vocational / Career Guidance

26.3.1 6th Year students are timetabled for one period of Career Guidance per week for eight weeks between September and December with the Guidance Counsellors.

26.3.2 Individual career one to one meetings are mandatory in 6th Year, with each student having a minimum of one meeting with a Guidance Counsellor.

26.3.3 All 6th Year students attend the Higher Options College Exhibition in September.

26.3.4 Attendance at College Open Days and Information Evenings is encouraged for all students in their areas of interest. Information on Open Days can be found on the Guidance website.

26.3.5 College and Career Information Talks are organised during our 'Lunchtime Series of Talks' and are optional for senior students. These talks are organised based on students' specific interests and requests.

26.3.6 All 6th Year students and their parents/guardians are invited to attend a CAO information evening to help inform them of the CAO process, from inputting college course options, to accepting college offers in early August.

26.3.7 A College/ Careers Fair (which was first launched in April 2023) takes place in Loreto Abbey, for all senior students (4th, 5th and 6th Years). This is an opportunity for students to speak with representatives from various universities and Colleges of Further Education. It provides an excellent forum for an exchange of information and ideas.

27. Past Pupils

27.1 Loreto Abbey has a strong tradition of keeping close links with their alumni. The Past Pupils Association has over 2000 past pupils linked on Social Media.

27.2 Loreto Abbey hosts re-unions of Year groups every decade. Past pupils gather annually for lunch and provide professional expertise to the school on specific projects. Many have also addressed students on their career paths/ life experience.

28. Procedure for identifying a student with Additional Educational Needs

28.1 One of our Deputy Principals meets parents/guardians in February of the year of entry to review psychological reports and to complete applications for D. E. S. hours where appropriate.

28.2 Standardised tests are administered to all 1st Year students in September, and the results of these tests can often help identify if a child requires additional support or perhaps further diagnostic testing.

28.3 A class teacher, tutor and or Year Head can refer any student they are concerned about to the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Department. Referral forms are available in the main office. This allows the Special Educational Teachers (SET) team to consult with the Student Support Team and class teachers to ascertain the nature of the additional support required.

28.4 When a parent notifies the Principal or a Deputy Principal that a student is not benefiting from the regular education programme provided by the school, together they initiate a process of formal and informal assessments to be conducted by the AEN team.

28.5 Informal assessments may involve some of the following:

- Observations from mainstream teachers
- Consultations with parents
- Student Journal
- Meeting with pupil

28.6 Formal assessment may involve some of the following:

- Review of CAT 4 Test results
- Review of in-house exams and reports
- Behavioural record if appropriate
- Woodcock Johnson IV (Irish Edition) Assessments

28.6.1 Following this profiling stage, decisions are made as to the appropriate support warranted. It may be decided that:

- There is no need for further action
- There is need for monitoring and support in a mainstream setting
- Purposeful withdrawal is desirable
- Further investigation is required by specialised individuals. Parents/guardians will be advised accordingly; for example an educational psychologist, NEPS psychologist, GP, Mental Health Services etc.

29. Whole School Guidance Links

29.1 The following demonstrates the whole school dimension of guidance and collaboration between the whole school community at Loreto Abbey and the Guidance Counsellor.

29.2 Class Teacher

29.2.1 Encourages students to reach their full potential both academically and personally.

29.2.2 Monitors behaviour and is sensitive to any difficulties students may be experiencing. Referrals to Year Head, Student Support Team, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal(s), and Principal as appropriate. Referral sheets can be found in the main office for the student support team and the Guidance Counsellor. Alternatively referrals can be made through the individual emails of each of the Guidance Counsellors.

29.2.3 Liaises with parents through journals or scheduled meetings.

29.3 Transition Year Coordinator

- Motivates and develops personal skills.
- Organises events, guest speakers, excursions, etc which promote personal development.
- Liaises with management, Guidance Counsellor and parents/guardians regarding programme development.

29.4 SPHE Teacher

- Promotes self-esteem and positive self-image.
- Enables and encourages student discussion in relation to social, personal and health issues.
- Monitors behaviour and uses referral systems as appropriate.

29.5 Additional Educational Needs Team

- Identifies and priorities students in need of support.
- Consults with Guidance Counsellor, NEPS Psychologist as required.
- Meets regularly with parents/guardians where appropriate.
- Liaises with primary schools.

29.6 Chaplain

29.6.1 The Chaplain works to support the faith and pastoral needs of the students. While the Chaplain is available to all students they have a special role with 1st Year students helping them to settle into their new school and being available to them as needs arise.

29.6.2 The Chaplain is part of the Student Support Team and collaborates with the Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, tutors and class teachers. They meet with students on a one to one basis and in small groups. They are available to meet with parents if deemed necessary.

29.6.3 The Chaplain supports the faith development of the students by collaborating with the RE team in organising retreats and liturgies throughout the year. They also organise rituals and prayer times to mark significant events in students' lives e.g. at times of illness or bereavement.

29.7 School Psychotherapist

29.7.1 We are fortunate to have a Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist come to the school once per week. Within this space the Psychotherapist goes about establishing a meaningful alliance with the young person, where they can feel truly met. Building this relationship requires a nuanced and specialist understanding of adolescent phenomenology and

development. By assessing the students' contact style and level of development, she can then employ an appropriate therapeutic plan to help support the student. Using sideways contact with anxious students helps them feel more relaxed. She also offers a wide range of creative aids (games, cards, drawing and sand space) to support students to find language for their experience. This means making, de shaming and reframing is what truly heals. Depending on the student, the Psychotherapist will also meet parents in the school to help support them with parenting strategies.

29.8 Sports Coordinator

- Responsibility for the coordination of extracurricular/sport/wellness activities for the student body.
- Management of fixtures, events and leagues/cup tournaments etc for all teams within Loreto Abbey.
- Approximately 12 individual sports are available to students, depending on the year; with up to 500 events throughout the school year.
- Management of coaching staff, budgets, resources and events.

29.9 Student Mentors

- Students have the opportunity to meet designated teachers for one to one mentoring sessions.
- Approximately four sessions take place in 5th and 6th Year.
- Goal setting, time management, and study habits are discussed.
- Referrals are made to the Guidance Counsellors if deemed necessary.

29.10 Student Council

- Identifies areas of student concern.
- Liaises with teacher representatives to promote positive change.

29.11 Amigas

29.11.1 The Amigas or the Anti-bullying Ambassadors are a group of approximately 50 students in the school. They are selected by their teachers to represent their classes as well as their year group in an anti-bullying capacity.

29.11.2 Their role is to draw attention to difficulties students may be experiencing outside of class time and report these issues on to the relevant teachers or Year Heads.

29.12 Parents Council

- Forum for parents to participate in ongoing development of the school.
- Voice and link for parents/guardians within the school community.

- Organise seminars for parents/guardians on parenting adolescents and provide speakers on careers for classes.

29.13 External Agencies

29.13.1 The Student Support Team, Guidance Counsellors, teachers and management of Loreto Abbey promote and foster links with the following:

- NEPS: Learning support teachers and Guidance Counsellors have contact and meetings with the educational psychologist if necessary.
- Social Workers: where necessary management will meet with social workers to support the vulnerable.
- Employers: TY coordinator and Work Experience coordinator foster links with employers
- Colleges/ Admissions Officers: Guest speakers are organised from various Colleges and Universities throughout the country.
- CAO/UCAS/ EUNICAS
- College of Further Education
- Community – Gardai / Defence Forces/ Paramedics / RSA
- State Examinations Commission
- Parents of Students: Parents/Guardians are invited to come in to share their educational and work life experiences with specific year groups and small groups of senior students.
- Past Pupils
- Primary Schools

30. Policies relating to Whole School Guidance

- Acceptable Behaviour - Internet access
- Admissions and Enrolment
- Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy
- Assessment
- Child Safeguarding Statement / Risk Assessment
- Code of Behaviour
- One to One Guidance Policy (This will be replaced by the new *Confidentiality Policy*)
- Critical Incident
- Data Protection (Data Access Procedures, Code of Practice, Record Retention Schedule)
- Health and Safety
- Homework
- Internet, Acceptable Use
- SPHE / RSE
- Strategy for School Attendance
- Student Support
- Substance Use

- Use of Assessment Instruments (Psychometrics)
- Wellbeing
- Whole School Inclusion

30. Areas for Development 2024/25

30.1 The following has been identified as areas for development over the coming year 2024/25:

30.1.1 Links with past pupils for contact database – Ongoing

30.1.2 Ongoing focus with parents/guardians who will come in and share their educational and work experience with students who have a common interest.

30.1.3 Further develop the profile of Whole School Guidance within the school and with parents/guardians by sharing experiences on our school website and our social media platforms.

30.1.4 Arrange three to four WSG Team meetings to take place each year. These meetings will pay specific attention to one or two key areas each year; this should be closely linked with the School Self Evaluation (SSE) Plan.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the 20th February 2024 and will be reviewed in 2027.

Signed: 

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 20th February 2024

Date for review: February 2027



Appendices

A-P

Appendix A

Looking at Whole School Guidance: What does success look like?

**Education Passport
Pas Oideachais**

Supporting your child's transition from primary to post-primary school
Ag tacú le haistriú do linbh ón mbunscoil go dtí an iarbhunscoil

Outline of transfer process from primary to post-primary

Primary principal ■ Post-primary principal ■ Parent(s)/guardian(s) ■

Phases of Transfer

	Role/Responsibility Who?	Action What?	Timeframe When?
1	Post-primary principal or designated person	Forward Information Request Form to the primary school(s)	Any time after Parent(s)/guardian(s) confirms enrolment
	<i>For children in need of additional support</i> Primary principal or designated person	Forward NEPS Student Transfer Form to parent(s)/guardian(s) and then to the post-primary school	It is recommended that this form transfers in a timely manner For children in need of additional supports such as special needs assistants, assistive technology or school transport, NCSE application deadlines should be considered
2	Primary principal or designated person	Forward Information letter 6th Class Report Card My Profile Form: copy My Child's Profile Form to Parent(s)/guardian(s)	By the end of the second week of June
	Parent(s)/guardian(s)	Complete and return My Child's Profile form to the primary school within five working days	By the end of the third week of June
	Primary principal or designated person	Forward Copy of Education Passports: 6th Class Report Card My Profile Form My Child's Profile Form to the post-primary school(s)	By early September
3	Post-primary principal or designated person	Forward Information Receipt to the primary school to acknowledge receipt of Education Passports and confirm pupil registration	By end of first week of October

The above timeline should help to ensure that materials are transferred in a timely manner.



Appendix C

RE: Consent Form to Attend Confidential One to One Guidance Sessions

Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey

(As part of admissions policy and/ or enrolment documents)

The whole-school guidance programme in this school aims to provide a safe environment for each student to grow and to develop their personal, social, careers, educational and life choices. The Guidance Counsellor/s in Loreto Abbey provide/s a confidential one-to-one guidance counselling service to students where appropriate. Here, the Guidance Counsellor may meet with students to discuss a range of careers, educational, personal and or social development issues.

Our school policy on confidentiality is informed, among others, by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Children First Guidelines (2017).

In the event that your daughter wishes to meet the Guidance Counsellor on a one-to-one basis at any stage throughout their time in the school, your permission is requested for any such meetings.

Our policy on confidentiality is available on the school website loretoabbeydalkey.ie

Please complete and return to the school Principal

Name of Student:.....

Year:.....

Class:.....

I give my permission for.....to attend one to one meetings with the Guidance Counsellor/s in Loreto Abbey, in keeping with the School's mission of support for students and in the context of the School's whole-school guidance programme.

Signature of parent/guardian:

Date:.....

Appendix D

Re: Administration of Assessment Instruments to Students (Consent Form)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s).

During your daughter's education in Loreto Abbey Secondary School, she will have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of assessment activity as part of normal teaching and learning.

Other specialist tests may also be administered to support your daughter's educational development and learning as well as her career development. Such tests may include achievement, ability, diagnostic and interest tests.

The results of all such tests will be shared with parents/guardians and students if it is deemed necessary or if it is requested. It is important to note that CAT 4 Cognitive Ability Testing which is done in 1st Year is used in conjunction with other forms of assessment, alongside teacher observations to help inform a baseline for our academic tracking system within Loreto Abbey. There may also be occasion to administer tests on an individual basis to your daughter to support her learning, progress and achievement. Such tests will only be administered following consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s).

I enclose a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) information sheet which may address any additional questions you may have in relation to the above. In addition, the school's policy on the use of assessment instruments is available from the school's website www.loretoabbeydalkey.ie

If you would like to find out more, please do not hesitate to contact the Guidance Counsellor at guidance@loretoabbeydalkey.ie

Please return the completed Consent Form below by (indicate date).

Your sincerely

.....

Please complete and return to the school Principal.

Name of Student:

Year:

Class:

I give consent for assessment instruments to be administered to my daughter while she is a student in Loreto Abbey Secondary School

Signature of parent/guardian:

Date:.....

Appendix E

Administration of Assessment Instruments (Psychometrics)

'FAQ Sheet for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)'

Who will be involved in the administration of assessment instruments?

Administration of assessment instruments will be undertaken by appropriately qualified school staff only, which in some instances will involve subject teachers, the school Guidance Counsellor and/or the learning support teacher (depending on the nature of the test).

How will the information be protected?

The school will ensure that the information, in line with data protection requirements, is kept secure with access confined to designated school staff. In the case of electronic information this will be kept secure through password protection. Only designated school staff will have access to this password.

Who will be able to access the information and results?

In order to ensure that your daughter receives an education that best supports her development, the information and results may be shared with your daughter's teachers in accordance with established test practice. This is to ensure that teaching approaches can be adapted to accommodate the different learning needs and styles of students. In addition, the Guidance Counsellor(s) and the additional educational needs teacher(s) will have access to the information.

How long will the school retain the information?

The school will retain the information until seven years after your daughter has left school. This is in line with data protection requirements.

Will we be informed of the results?

All parents/guardians will be informed of the test scores achieved by their daughters if it is deemed necessary. Please refer to Use of Assessment Instrument Policy for further details.

My child has Additional Educational Needs (AEN) or takes English as an Additional Language (EAL), is further testing appropriate?

If your child has been identified as having an AEN or is an EAL student, and you have disclosed this information to the school, it may not be necessary or appropriate for your child to take a specific test. A member of the school staff will be in touch with you prior to the administration of a test to discuss this further with you.

Key Policies, Circulars and Publications:

Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools - From [Department of Education](#); Published on 17 January 2023

file:///C:/Users/Careers/Downloads/244892_6b9f7a62-d8f7-407c-92c3-f0e423922c93.pdf

Best Practice, Ethical and Legal Considerations in Psychometric Testing for Guidance Counsellors. Declan Fitzgerald and Ciara Farrell (2014)

<https://www.etbi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NCGE-PP-Best-Practice-Ethical-Legal-Psychometric-EN.pdf?x88492>

Video Role Play: Provision of Feedback on Psychometric Test Results on Vimeo. Declan Fitzgerald (2015) <https://vimeo.com/125838201>

Appendix F

Appointment Request Slip

<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>	<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>
<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>	<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>
<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>	<p>I would like to request an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>My query is:</p> <p>Personal ___ Educational ___ Careers ___ <i>(Please Tick)</i></p>

Appendix G

Confirmation of Guidance Counselling Meeting Forms

Guidance & Counselling Department	Guidance & Counselling Department
<p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>The student named above has an appointment.</p> <p>Time: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Signed (Counsellor): _____</p> <p>Signed (Teacher): _____</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>The student named above has an appointment.</p> <p>Time: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Signed (Counsellor): _____</p> <p>Signed (Teacher): _____</p>
<p>I have spoken to the student named above and she is now returning to class.</p> <p>Time: _____</p> <p>Signed: _____</p>	<p>I have spoken to the student named above and she is now returning to class.</p> <p>Time: _____</p> <p>Signed: _____</p>

Appendix H

Educational / Career Guidance Counselling One to One Record


Educational /career guidance counselling
one-to-one record

Session Number:

© National Centre for Guidance in Education 2020

School Name:

Guidance Counsellor Name:

Student's Name / Identifier:

Time

Date

This record template has been designed and provided by the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) for direct use by individual school Guidance Counsellors with students. Information provided on this form is NOT recorded, transferred to or held by NCGE.

Subjects Studied:	Level:	JC:	SC:	Notes / additional subjects:
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Educational / Careers Interests:

Career Plan:

(JC – subjects for SC; SC – post-school – HPAT, UCAS, scholarships, apprenticeships, FET etc)

Appendix I

Personal One to One Guidance Counselling Record



Educational / career guidance counselling
one-to-one record

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Interests, Talents, Pastimes:

Family Careers (background):

Strengths:

Achievements:

Goals:

Notes (brief record of discussion, decisions, agreed actions):

Guidance Counsellor Signature

Student Signature

Session length

Next Appointment

Appendix J

Counselling Referral Form



Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey

Referral Form to Belinda Kelly

Reason for Referral

Learning

Behavioural

Other

Discussed at Student Support Meeting

Yes

No

Name of Student:

Year Group:

Name of Year Head or Teacher Referring:

Date:

Any further comments if required:

Appendix K

Higher Options Consent Form

[Date]

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s)

As part of the school's Guidance programme, all 5th and 6th Year students will attend the Irish Times / Institute of Guidance Counsellors' Higher Options Exhibition in the RDS. Our 6th Year students will attend on **Wednesday ... September 20...** The cost of which has been invoiced as part of students booklists (€11 per student) this year.

Higher Options is one of the most comprehensive exhibitions for senior level students and parents who want to know what third level university and college options are available.

Exhibitors from Ireland, the UK, Europe and the USA will be in attendance at the RDS providing information on their courses or recruitment policies. Students will also have the opportunity to attend talks and lectures on various careers, along with college entry procedures etc.

A full list of exhibitors for the conference is now available on www.irishtimes.com/higher-options.

Students and Parents / Guardians are asked to note the following points:

- Full uniform must be worn and the school's Code of Conduct will apply.
- All students will make their own way to the RDS and will check in at precisely 9am with Ms Shortt & Ms Brophy, just outside the main door of the RDS Simmonscourt building. Students are responsible for their own safety and wellbeing travelling to and from the venue and while at the Higher Options itself. Students should take particular care at all times.
- Students should bring sufficient money to cover travel and food expenses for the day. There are a number of areas where students can sit and eat their own packed lunch, if they wish to do so.
- Students will return to school from Higher Options for classes at 1.40 p.m. For those students who are attending on the Wednesday, they can return home directly after the event or to after school study.

Appendix L

College / Career Information Talks for ____ Year Students

2024/25

No .	College/ University	Contact	Correspondence	Date
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

Appendix M

UCAS Information Pack

The following information is designed to assist you with your UCAS application. Please note that it is important that you refer to the UCAS website and to speak with your Guidance Counsellors before making an application. You should also give yourself an appropriate amount of time to prepare your application and seek out the necessary information that will be required for it.

Once you have registered with [UCAS](#) (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, which is the official application route for the majority of full-time undergraduate courses) you will be required to provide a buzzword which is unique to your school. This will associate your account with your school. It will also allow us to input the necessary information pertaining to predicted grades and your reference.

The application consists of 6 sections, these include;

- Section 1: Personal Details
- Section 2: University Choices
- Section 3: Formal Qualifications
- Section 4: Employment History
- Section 5: Personal Statement
- Section 6: Reference

These sections can be completed in any order, but it's important that before you submit your application each section is checked prior to submission, to ensure there are no mistakes.

Buzzword: (Students will receive the buzzword from the Guidance Counsellors at time of application)

KEY DATES: *Note - Please confirm key dates on the UCAS website**

2024 ENTRY DEADLINE FOR THE UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE, AND MOST COURSES IN MEDICINE, VETERINARY MEDICINE/SCIENCE, AND DENTISTRY

Date: 16th October 2023 (Please confirm key dates on the UCAS website)

2024 ENTRY DEADLINE FOR ALL UCAS UNDERGRADUATE COURSES, EXCEPT THOSE WITH A 16th OCTOBER DEADLINE

Date: 31st January 2024 (Please confirm key dates on the UCAS website)

Key Points

The UCAS Application Process:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/advice-parents-and-guardians/ucas-undergraduate-application-process>

Please be sure to go through each of the video tutorials that are available across each section of the UCAS website. They are really informative and make the application process very straightforward.

Personal Statement:

The advice would be to choose your courses and then complete your personal statement. As this will allow you to tailor your personal statement accordingly.

Your personal statement is a crucial part of your application, within which you should explain your motivation for applying to University. It is important to showcase your drive and passion for the subject area in question, and any skills or experience you may have which will help you be a successful student. Some colleges may accept an additional statement if you are applying for a diverse range of courses.

Reference:

Please be sure to contact Mr Dunne as soon as you have finalised your course choices, in order to allow him plenty of time to complete your reference. It would be worth taking the time to email him with a clear outline as to why you are choosing a particular course. Also include information of any extracurricular activities that you have been involved in throughout your

time here at Loreto Abbey and any work experience opportunities that you have engaged with during these academic years, including any voluntary work that you have been involved in.

Note under Full education history:

You must enter all your *Junior Certificate Results*. You should also include all the subjects that you intend to sit for the Leaving Certificate exam. For this particular set of subjects you will put the level at which you are studying and then 'pending' for the result itself.

You will need to ask your individual teachers to give you a predicted grade for each of these subjects and this will be inputted into the system along with your reference.

UCAS Checklist

Work through this handy checklist and it will make the process a lot simpler and easier to manage.

- Sign up to UCAS Hub!!
- Have you registered all your details?
- Have you completed or signed up for any additional testing as part of the overall requirements for your course?
- Have you used our specific **buzzword** to link with Loreto Abbey, Dalkey?
- **Have you chosen your five options?** This could be the same course at five different institutions, five different courses at five different institutions or five different courses at the same institution.
- Have you completed your **personal statement**?
- Have you got a **reference from Mr Dunne**?
- Have you obtained your **predicted grades** from all your teachers?
- Have you received your confirmation letter from UCAS?

- Have you checked the status of your offer on UCAS Track?
- Have you received any offers?
- Have you replied to offers? Remember that universities will set deadlines by which you need to reply.
- Check to see if you have met the entry requirements for your chosen course/university. If you have missed out by just one of your grades then check UCAS Track as the university still may have accepted you.
- Have you looked at the options in Clearing? If you have not been accepted by any of your choices you are automatically entered into Clearing through UCAS Track.

Appendix N

Grade Predictions for Student Applying to UCAS

Student's Name:

Year of Leaving Certificate:

Can teachers please fill in the predicted grades for the above student?

Subject	Predicted Grade	Teachers Signature

Principal's signature: _____

Date: _____

[Please Note that these grade predictions represent an estimate of what the school thinks the applicant may be able to achieve. Teachers are able to justify their decisions by reference to evidence of performance, achievement and potential to date.]

Appendix O

'Taking Stock'

Questionnaire for 6th Year Students:

This is completed through Google Forms

'Taking Stock' of where you are at the current time and identifying the Guidance supports you need.

Dear Student,

This questionnaire has been created and distributed to understand how you are coping as we approach the end of term, and to enable your Guidance Counsellor to continue to support you at the current time.

This short questionnaire contains 35 questions and should take about 5-10 minutes to complete.

Student Name:

Please indicate whether you agree/disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Agree	Disagree
Future Plans:		
I have a clear idea of what I want to do next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am clear on how to go about getting into what I want to do next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a 'back up' plan for next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are some areas of my plan I am not clear about	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel ready for the next step in my education/ future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Systems and Applications:		
I think I will qualify for a grant and have applied through SUSI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think I will qualify for a grant but am not sure how to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied to the CAO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my Level 8 course list on my CAO application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my Level 6/7 course list on my CAO application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

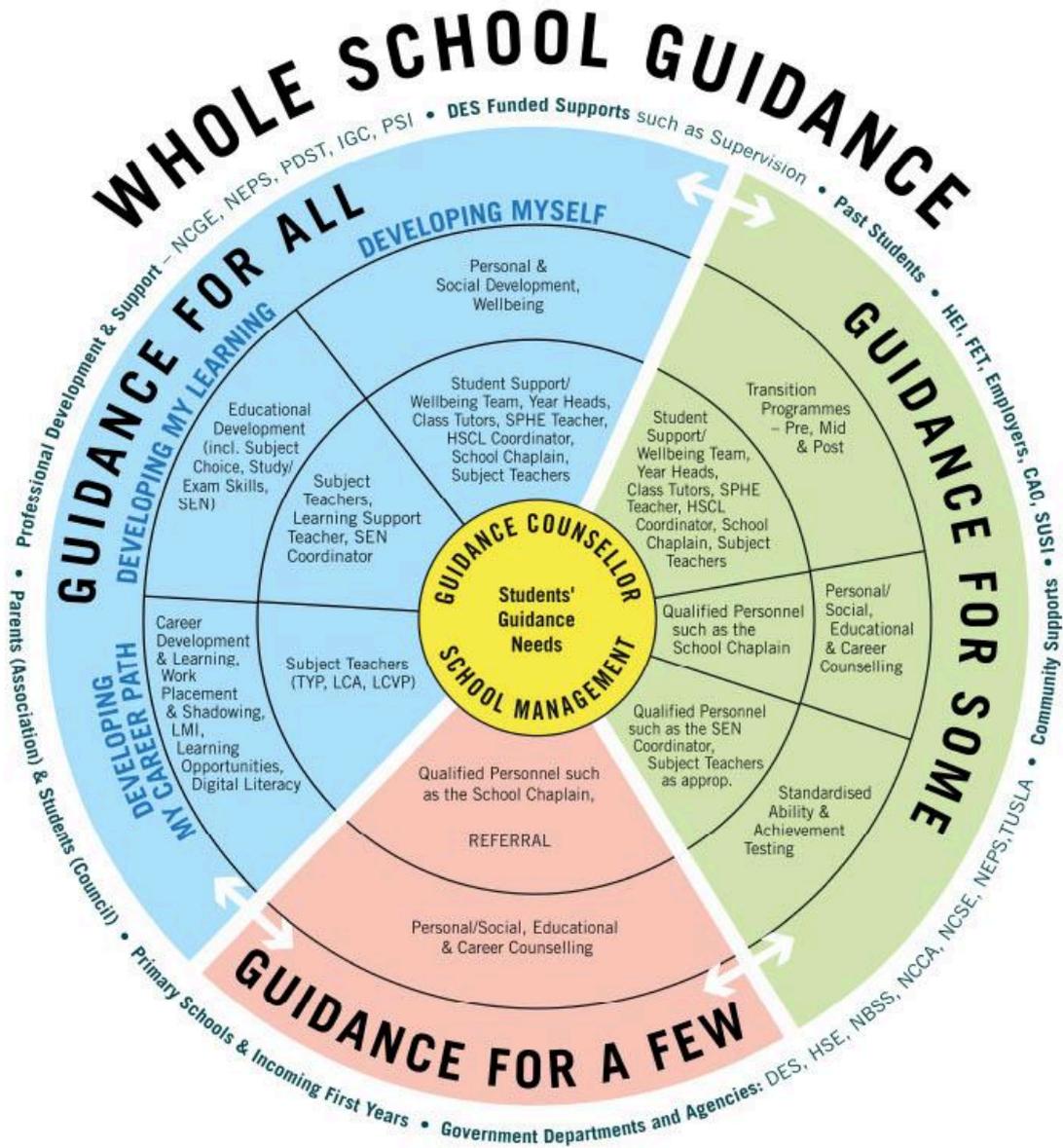
I am comfortable with the CAO 'Change of Mind' process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied/am applying for a PLC course for next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help applying for a PLC course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied/am applying for an apprenticeship for next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help applying for an apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am applying for jobs for next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help with my CV	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help with applying for scholarships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help with applying for campus accommodation for next year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a question about the HEAR application I submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a question about the DARE application I submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need a reference from the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I may opt to sit the Leaving Cert Examinations at a later date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied to UCAS and would like to discuss this with my Guidance Counsellor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied to study in Europe / USA and would like to discuss my application with my Guidance Counsellor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to apply to study abroad and would like to discuss this with my Guidance Counsellor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like help with interview preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wellbeing		
I feel like I am coping well at the moment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have someone I can talk to when I need to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am worried that my stress levels are high at the moment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication		
I know how to contact the school if I need to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to contact my Guidance Counsellor if I need to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know where I can go for information on my career during the summer months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know who I can contact for information on my future plans during the summer months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is something I want to speak to my Guidance Counsellor about on a one-to-one meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IF you need to contact your Guidance Counsellor you can do so by emailing us: Ms Shortt - guidance@loretoabbeydalkey.ie / Ms Brophy - Orla.Brophy@loretoabbeydalkey.ie

Appendix P

Whole School Guidance Wheel (for pg. 13)

Excerpt from - 'NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework'
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Note: school programmes and staffing indicated are not meant to be exhaustive i.e. programmes/staff involved in whole school guidance will vary across schools. This intends to highlight programmes/staff which may be involved in the delivery of a whole school guidance programme.

Full document can be accessed via www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook

