

St. Angela's School



Whole School Guidance Plan

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1. Introduction

St. Angela's School is under the trusteeship of Le Chéile Schools Trust. The purpose of our Le Chéile / Ursuline school is to provide an education that acknowledges and affirms the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God. It embraces the intellectual, physical, cultural, emotional, social, moral and spiritual growth of each student.

Our school seeks to build a learning community that welcomes, and witnesses to, the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the Le Chéile Charter. The school draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past and the charism of St. Angela of the Ursuline order who began this school.

Our school is committed to creating a place of inclusivity, equality and openness, where people can live with and be taught by one another, however diverse our experiences might be. It does not discriminate on religious grounds and is open to students from diverse backgrounds. It offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly to their own lives, the lives of others and the earth, which is our home.

2. Mission Statement

St. Angela's School is a girls' Catholic school which aims to cherish the uniqueness of each individual and develop her to her full potential, in the spirit of the Ursuline ethos.

Our Whole Guidance Plan fully supports our Mission Statement.

3. Definition

Guidance is defined as 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.

This definition highlights the holistic nature of guidance in supporting students' personal and social, educational and career development and the important role guidance plays in facilitating decision making and life choices, and in promoting supporting students' wellbeing.

4. Rationale

Section 9(c) of the *Education Act (1998)* states that schools must "*ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.*"

The Inspectorate's identification of best practice broadens the DES guidelines in a tangible way for both Guidance Counsellors and school management.

Circulars and Allocation:

- Circular 0007/2018 outlines the approved allocation of teaching posts for voluntary secondary schools for 2018/19.
- Each school must collaboratively develop a Whole-School Guidance Plan to support students' needs.

Whole-School Guidance Plan:

- Guidance is a whole-school activity requiring collaboration among all staff.
- Plans should:
 - Outline the school's approach to guidance.
 - Support students in making choices and transitions in personal, social, educational, and career areas.
 - Distinguish competencies within the school and when referral to health services or medical professionals is warranted.
 - Align resource allocation with the objectives of the Guidance Plan.
 - Reference the Special Education Needs Policy Statement.

Board of Management Responsibilities:

- Review and update the plan regularly.
- Ensure adequate resourcing before adoption.
- Make the plan available to staff, parents, and students.

Useful Publications:

- Framework for Considering Provision of Guidance in Post-Primary Schools (2012)
- Wellbeing Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools (2013)
- NCGE School Guidance Handbook

Wellbeing and Guidance:

- The promotion of wellbeing is central to the Department of Education's vision.
- *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023* outlines indicators of success, with Whole-School Guidance playing a significant role.

Time for Individual Students:

- Schools must adjust Guidance Plans to meet Action 9.1 of the *Action Plan for Education 2017*:
 - Include specified time for one-to-one guidance counselling.
 - Allocate time for supporting the Student Support Team.

Resource Allocation:

- Guidance provision is based on approved enrolment and communicated via circulars (0002/2023, 0003/2023, 0004/2023).
- Schools deploy hours for classes, small groups, and individual meetings.

Supporting Frameworks and Strategies:

- Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2017)
 - Six wellbeing indicators: *active, responsible, connected, resilient, respected, aware*.
 - Guidance supports learning about and for wellbeing.
- Looking At Our School 2023: A Quality Framework
 - Encourages schools to review practices in teaching, learning, and leadership.
- School Self-Evaluation Guidelines (2016–2020)
 - Supports evaluation and development of guidance programmes.
- Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025
 - Emphasises career guidance as essential for lifelong learning and course retention.
- Framework for Junior Cycle (2015)
 - Guidance provision can be included in the 400 hours for Wellbeing.
- Digital Strategy for Schools (2015–2020)
 - Promotes ICT integration in guidance activities.
- NEPS Well-being Guidelines (2013)
 - Advocates a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing using a continuum of support model.

Circular 0001/2025: Guidance in Post-Primary Schools

Guidance is, by definition, person-centred and holistic, supporting an individual’s personal and social, educational, and career development. It empowers individuals to make informed decisions and life choices.

In post-primary schools, guidance plays a significant role in promoting student wellbeing and building both internal and external resilience.

Whole School Guidance:

Whole-School Guidance (WSG) is the contemporary model for guidance in post-primary schools. WSG means that all school personnel—including, but not limited to, guidance counsellors—share responsibility for supporting students in their personal, social, educational, and career choices.

WSG involves a progressive, developmental sequence of activities and learning experiences, including:

- One-to-one appointments
- Group work
- Classroom guidance
- Units of learning
- Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

WSG Programme:

A WSG programme is a clear and defined list of activities and learning experiences provided by school personnel to meet the identified guidance needs of the school community (students and parents/guardians/carers).

As guidance needs vary across schools, WSG programmes will differ from school to school. Each school must have a WSG plan in place, which outlines the school's approach to WSG and includes a detailed WSG programme.

Planning and Implementation:

WSG activities should be based on the needs of the school community and planned by a nominated WSG team, within which the guidance counsellor plays a specialised role. WSG is the responsibility of the entire school community. The Board of Management and school management team must ensure that guidance provision and practice are of the highest possible standard.

Relevant Legislative and Policy Context

- Circular: 0001/2025 Guidance in Post-Primary Schools
- Information Note 003/2024 Information Note for Principals, Guidance Counsellors and Guidance Teams in relation to the storage and transfer of guidance-counselling notes
- Information Note to Schools 001/2024, Information Note for Principals, Guidance Counsellors, and Guidance Teams in relation to Whole-School Guidance
- National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance (2024-2030)
- National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance: Strategic Action Plan (2024-2030)
- Information Note 0009/2023, Information Note for Principals, Guidance Counsellors, and Guidance Teams in relation to Whole School Guidance Provision at Junior Cycle
- Information Note for Schools in relation to Personal and Social Guidance Counselling 008/2023
- Looking at our Schools 2022 DES
- Framework for Junior Cycle 2015 DES
- Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools: A Guide to Establishing a Team or Reviewing an Existing Team (2021).
- Education for Sustainable Development to 2026, Government 2023.
- National Skills Strategy 2025–Need for educational and career choices support in education
- Indecon Report 2019 – Review of Career Guidance
- Action Plan for Education - Statement of Strategy 2021-2023
- Wellbeing Guidelines 2021
- Wellbeing Policy & Framework for Practice 2018-2023 – Centrality of guidance in Wellbeing
- Circular 55/2019 – Wellbeing and Guidance

- NCGE – A Whole School Guidance Framework 2017
- Programme Recognition Framework: Guidance Criteria/Guidelines (DES, 2016)
- NEPS – A continuum of Support for Post Primary schools 2007, 201NEPS Well-being in Post-primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (2013).
- 21st Century Skills for Students – World Economic Forum
- Digital Strategy for Schools – 2007, 2015-2020 - ICT and Guidance
- Circular 0001/2023 – Use of psychometric tests
- Circular 0015/2017 – Guidance as part of JCT Wellbeing
- Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 (DES, 2016e).
- SSE Guidelines 2016-2020 –Evaluation of Holistic learning as central to student wellbeing

5. Scope

This plan applies to the entire school community (students, staff and parents) of St. Angela's under the headings of Personal and Social Development, Educational Guidance and Vocational Guidance.

Whole-School Guidance (WSG) provides students with appropriate guidance as it supports the implementation of a large and varied range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence. These experiences, which begin as a student transitions into post-primary school, assist students to develop self-management skills, which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. WSG refers to a school-wide approach to supporting students with their personal and social, educational and career development. It recognises that all members of school staff, including school leaders, teachers, chaplains, ancillary staff and others can play a supporting role.

In the context of WSG, it is important to acknowledge the professional boundaries, areas of specialisation and competencies of each member of school staff. WSG acknowledges that all school staff have a role in providing Guidance to students and this is acknowledged and reflected in our school's WSG plan and individual subject department plans. Within the WSG approach, guidance counsellors have a pivotal and specialised role.

6. Aims and Objectives

St. Angela's School aims to provide an inclusive learning environment which will foster the educational, vocational, social, personal, and emotional development of all students. In line with our core values, whole school guidance provision and support for students will reflect the diverse range of cultures and abilities of students in our school.

The Whole School Guidance Plan aims to:

- Affirm good practices in our school which "aim to cherish the uniqueness of each individual" through all aspects of school life including our Pastoral Care structure and Care Team system.
- Set out the learning experiences and activities of the guidance programme.
- Reflect the needs of both Junior and Senior Cycle students.
- Achieve a balance in the provision of personal/social, educational and career guidance offered to students.

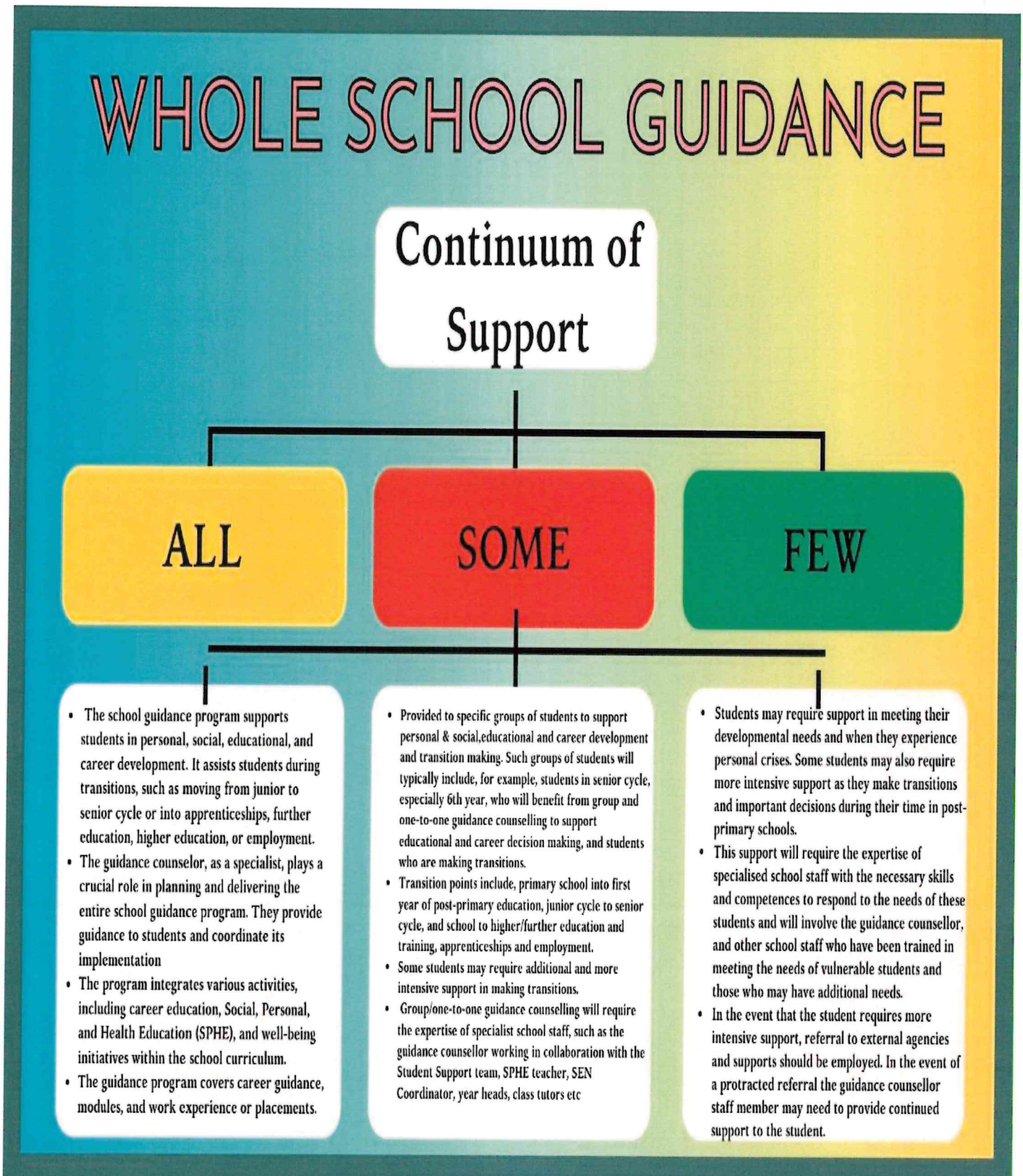
The objectives of this Whole School Guidance plan enable students achieve the following outcomes:

- To clarify educational, social and career goals.
- To address personal issues.
- To identify and explore opportunities.
- To grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves.
- To make informed choices about their lives and follow through on these choices.
- To support the development of every student.
- To acknowledge and support each person's role in the school community.
- To develop self-management and organisational skills which may be applied to learning in the classroom and other areas of life.
- To allow students to engage in personal reflection with a view to lifelong learning.
- To encourage communication between all relevant stakeholders.
- To develop skills around self-resilience as a coping strategy through life's journey.
- To provide an environment where each individual can develop self-esteem and a sense of personal responsibility.
- To provide an environment where each individual can develop a place in society and a responsibility to society.
- To provide a teaching and learning environment where each individual can reach their full potential

- To acknowledge and support equality, diversity and inclusion of all students and staff in our school community.
- To monitor the well-being of all students.
- To apply best practice in the protection of students and the promotion of their welfare, within the resources available in accordance with DES and School Child Protection Policy.
- To work effectively with statutory authorities and outside agencies as and when required.
- To adhere to the Children First Guidelines 2017.

7. Guidance Curricular Programme

Model of Provision: A Continuum of Support



The graphics above and below illustrate the continuum of support model on which our school's provision is based. The guidance counsellor, in collaboration with the school leadership team, and external personnel/agencies, deliver a wide range of supports to enhance students' personal, educational and career development.

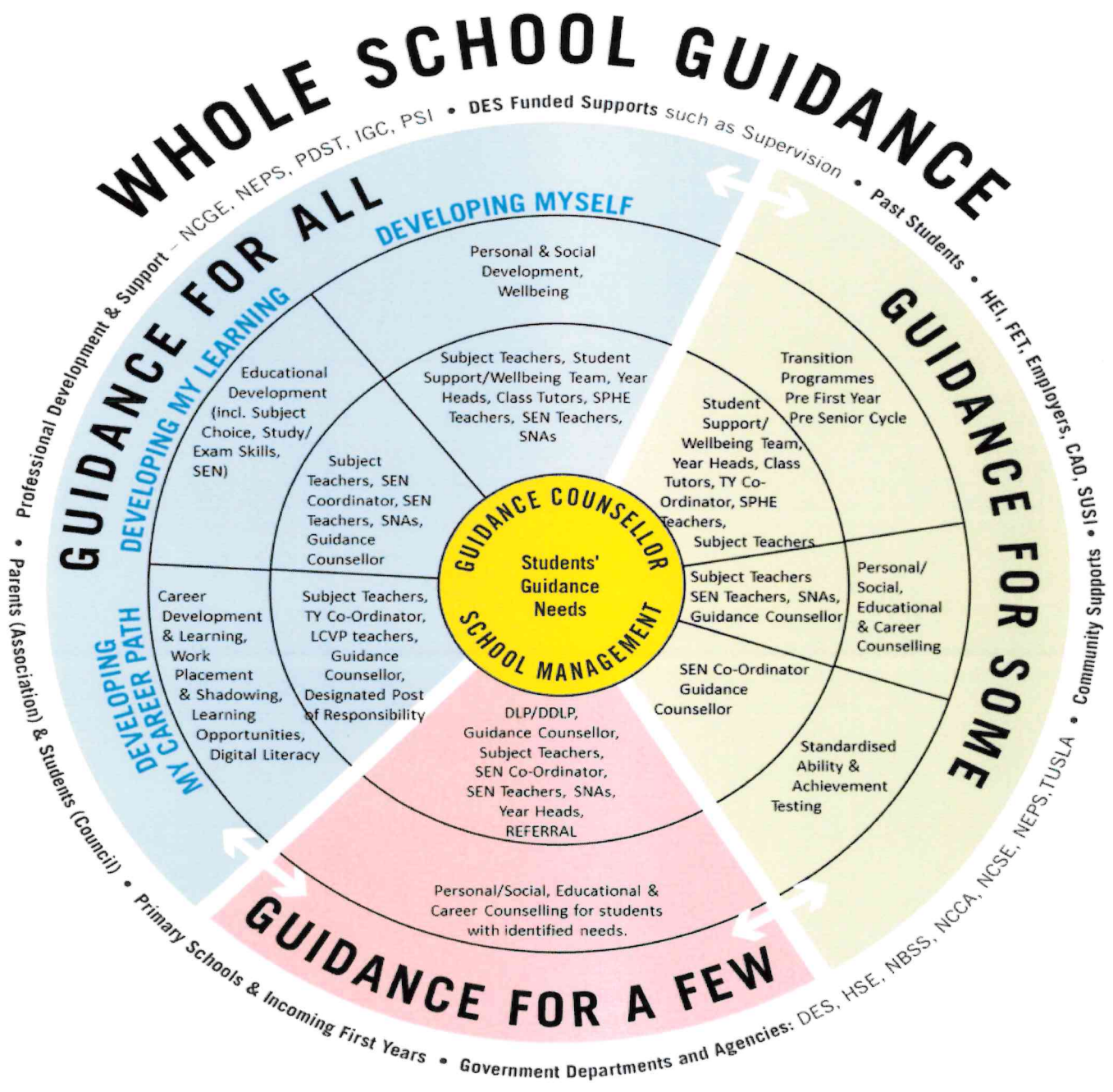
The guidance curriculum has two components:

Formal Guidance Curriculum:

1. Classroom Guidance: Delivered during timetabled, non-timetabled classes or year groups, covering topics like organizational support and subject choices.
2. Individual Contact: Personal, educational, and career counselling.

Informal Guidance Curriculum:

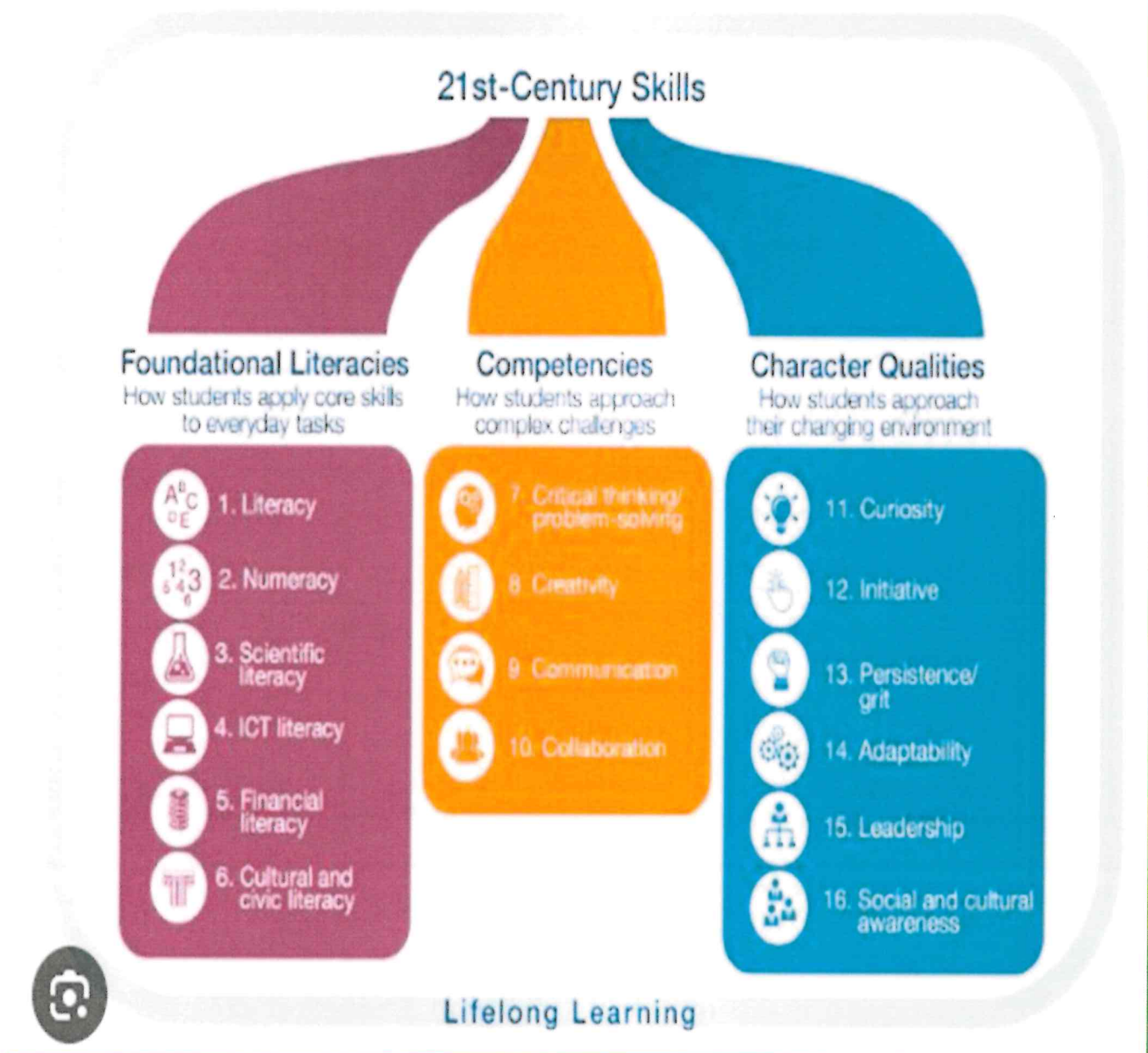
- Involves liaising with teaching staff, Year Heads, and non-teaching staff to enhance cross-curricular links and promote a whole-school approach.
- Meeting with parents/guardians is integral to this approach.



Areas of Learning, Skills and Competences

Guidance-related learning starts in early childhood education and continues through students' primary and post-primary education. It is underpinned by the **21st-century skills** identified by the World Economic Forum which are a set of competencies that are essential for thriving in the modern world.

Exhibit 1: Students require 16 skills for the 21st century



As part of this holistic development, students in St Angela’s School follow three areas of guidance-related learning to allow them to develop in 8 areas of competence. These outcomes relate to the development of self-awareness and self-knowledge, knowledge of learning and work opportunities, and applying this knowledge to make effective transitions and decision making.

Areas of Learning

Competences

Developing Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Developing & maintaining self-esteem & a positive self-concept •Interacting effectively with others (face-to-face & online) •Developing & growing throughout life
Developing My Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Employing effective personal learning/exam strategies •Making educational choices in line with career aspirations
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 & decision making

These competencies are built upon in a variety of school programmes such as:

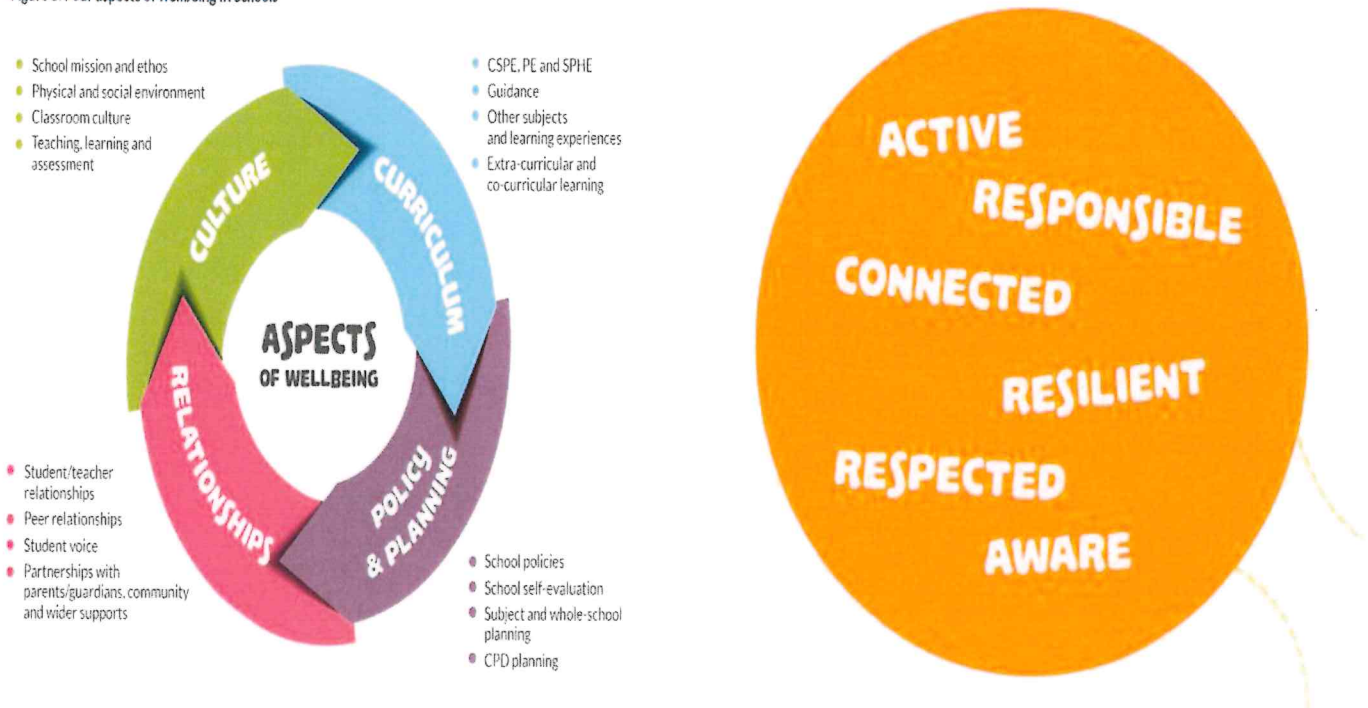
Junior Cycle



The Guidance Counsellors and the Wellbeing Coordinator all have a role in planning, coordinating, and delivering guidance-related learning (Guidance for All) associated with the relevant Key Skills and in providing more intensive interventions to those students who need it through Guidance for Some and Guidance for A Few approaches.

Wellbeing

Figure 3: Four aspects of wellbeing in schools



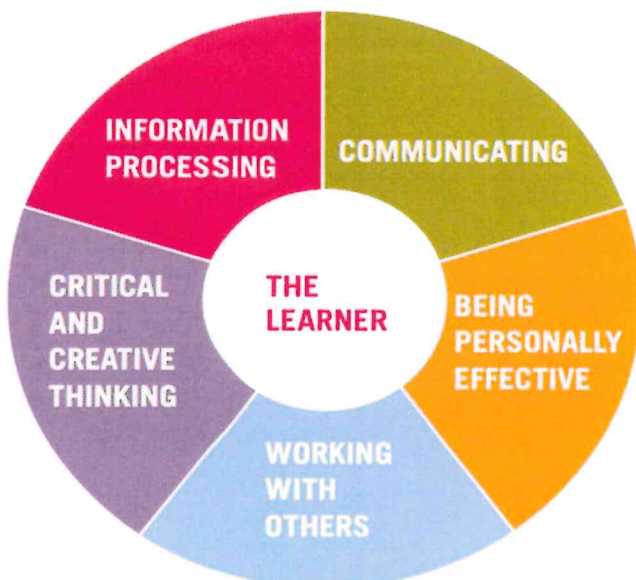
Wellbeing is linked to the Staying Well key skill of the Framework for Junior Cycle. SPHE, CSPE, Singing, Reading, Physical Education, and guidance related learning are some of the main pillars of Wellbeing.

The eight competences can be linked with five of the six indicators of Wellbeing – Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware.

Senior Cycle

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 are prerequisites for life and for the workplace in the 21st century.

Five key skills have been identified as central to teaching and learning across the senior cycle curriculum:



8. Whole School Guidance Programme Overview

St Angela's recognises that Guidance is a whole school responsibility and not provided exclusively by any one individual or group. Whole School Guidance is a holistic process where all members of school staff have a role to play. The professional boundaries, areas of specialisation and competencies of each member of our school staff are acknowledged.

The Whole School Guidance Programme is structured to provide a range of learning experiences in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make transitions based on these choices. The programme supports students at all levels of the Continuum of Support. These learning experiences may be categorised into three separate but interlinked dimensions/areas:

- A. Personal and Social Development
- B. Educational Guidance
- C. Career and Vocational Guidance

Personal and Social Development

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Be able to recognise their own talents/achievements.
- Develop strategies to deal with stress, personal/social issues in context of adolescence.
- Identify the demands of study/exams and balance time for school, work and leisure activities.
- Develop interpersonal skills and awareness of the needs of others.
- Learn to make successful transitions for sustainable life-long learning.
- Be satisfied that their needs including special educational needs are identified and supported.
- Be aware of the counselling service, which is available to support them in reaching their potential.

Personal and Social development is largely delivered through the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme at Junior Cycle. In Senior Cycle it is delivered through R.E., RSE and Wellbeing. It comprises the following modules: Belonging and Integrating, Self-Management, Communication Skills, Physical Health, Friendship, Relationships and Sexuality, Emotional Health, Influences and Decisions, Substance Use and Personal Safety.

Educational Guidance

Educational Guidance is developmental in nature and allows the student to take responsibility for their own learning and progress. In St Angela's School Educational Guidance begins at the students' entry in 1st Year by empowering students in their subject choice. Another key transition point is in TY where subject choices are made for Senior Cycle.

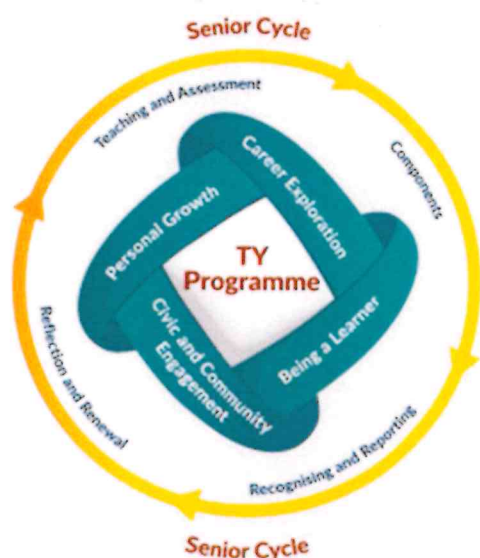
Other areas of guidance include subject level selection, motivation and learning, study skills and examination skills, learning related problems and counselling for these learning difficulties, teacher consultations, psychometric testing, and consulting parents/guardians about related matters.

Career and Vocational Guidance

Career development and investigation is vocational in nature and is mainly concentrated at Senior Cycle. It involves empowering students to recognise their talents and abilities to enable them to make informed choices and take responsibility for their own futures.

Career development includes areas such as development of self-awareness, employment opportunities, employment rights and duties, personal vocational guidance interviews, organisation of career talks, career research and career / course information, decision and planning skills, and use of ICT tools available.

In Senior Cycle we are adapting to the new Transition Year and Senior Cycle specifications. In Senior Cycle, students are made aware of all options and pathways open to them, such as Further Education and Training, Higher Education, Apprenticeships, and the world of work.



The following charts outline how Personal & Social, Educational and Career Guidance are delivered in St. Angela's.

PERSONAL & SOCIAL	EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE	CAREER GUIDANCE
Pastoral Care Structure	Pastoral Care Structure	Pastoral Care Structure
Care Team Meetings	Care Team Meetings	Care Team Meetings
Guidance Counsellors x 3	Guidance Counsellors x 3	Guidance Counsellors x 3
Guest Speakers	Guest Speakers	Guest Speakers
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing
SENO for each Year Group, NEPS	SENO for each Year Group, for each Year Group,, NEPS	SENO for each Year Group, NEPS
Other Agencies -SHY, SWAY, Rape Crisis Centre, Edmund Rice summer Camps, Pobal Projects, St. Bridgets, Pieta House, Waterford Sexual Assault Centre		
		CAT4 Level E, Subject choice (1:1 Guidance Interviews, Presentation Night by Guidance Counsellor, SETU Board games, Subject Coordinator presentations by all subjects), Mock interviews, Work Experience

International Women's Day		International Women's Day
SPHE	SPHE	SPHE
LGBTIQ+, TENI		
Home / school Communication	Home / school Communication	Home / school Communication
School Refusal - school attendance strategy.	School Refusal - school attendance strategy.	School Refusal - school attendance strategy.
Awards Day.	Awards Day.	
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.	CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.	CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.
Retreats		
Wellbeing Week.	Wellbeing Week.	Wellbeing Week.
Ceannaire.		
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits, CAT4 Level E Entrance Tests	1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits CAT4 Level E Entrance Tests	1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits, CAT4 Level E Entrance Tests
Reach and other Access Scheme SETU Library, DARE HEAR	Reach and other Access Scheme SETU Library, DARE HEAR	Reach and other Access Scheme. DARE HEAR SETU. NUI and other university Language Exemptions
Extra- curricular activities		Extra- curricular
Wellbeing Programme	Wellbeing Programme	Wellbeing Programme
SEN - New Resource model	SEN - New Resource model	SEN - New Resource model
School Mass	Guest Speakers timetabled for 5 th and 6 th Year with other year groups invited where relevant. 5th Year Guidance classes run each term.	UCAS lunchtime classes, CAO. EUNICAS speaker each year. National Learning Network. Solas Training Centre visit.
RSE	Guidance timetabled for TY and 6 th Year. 6 th Years are timetabled for 1 hour of Career Guidance weekly in a Computer Room. TY Career Guidance runs for half of an academic year.	Guidance timetabled. TY and 6 th Year. 6 th Years are timetabled for 1 hour of Career Guidance weekly in a Computer Room. TY Career Guidance runs for half of an academic year.
Travelling Community	3rd Level Open Days & Appropriate Destination Options	Open Days for 3rd level & Higher Options/WorldSkills. Career visits to local businesses.
Ukrainian Breakfast	EAL, CAT4 Level F (6 th Class Entrance Tests)	EA
Wellbeing Week	TY, CAT4 Level E, Mock interviews, Work Experience	TY, CAT4 Level F, Mock interviews, Work Experience
Multicultural Day	Use of ICT in Guidance	Use of ICT in Guidance
Book Week	Cross Curricular	Cross Curricular
Resilience and ICT Workshops for all 1 st Years	STEM	STEM
International Students	Peer Tutoring	DARE testing
Book Week	LCVP	LCVP
	LCA	LCA
	JCPA, OAL	JCPA, OAL
	Study Skills and talks - students & parents. Resilience	Study Skills - students & parents. Resilience
	Options for 6 th Years: CAO, EUNICAS, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, UCAS, Further Education Courses, Tertiary Degree, HEAR/Dare, SUSI and other options Evening	CAO Evening Options for 6 th Years: CAO, EUNICAS, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, UCAS, Further Education Courses, Tertiary Degree, HEAR/Dare, SUSI and other options Evening

	Open Nights for incoming 1 st Years. PT Meetings.	Open Nights for incoming 1 st Years. PT Meetings.
	Information Nights 3rd → 4 th and 4th → 5th	Information Nights 3rd → 4 th and 4th → 5th

PERSONAL & SOCIAL	FOR ALL	FOR SOME	FOR FEW
Pastoral Care Structure	√		
Care Team Meetings	√		
Guidance Counsellors	√		
Guest Speakers	√		
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	√		
SENO for each year group, NEPS	√		√
Other Agencies -SHY, SWAY, Rape Crisis Centre, Edmund Rice Sumer Camps, Pobal Projects,	√	√	√
International Women's Day	√		
SPHE	√		
TENI	√	√	
Home / school Communication	√		
School Refusal - School Attendance Strategy.	√		√
Awards Day.	√		
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.	√		
Retreats		√	
Wellbeing Week	√		
Ceannaire.		√	
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits, CAT4 Entrance Tests		√	
Reach and other Access Scheme, SETU Library, DARE HEAR			√
Extra- curricular activities	√		
Wellbeing Programme	√		
SEN - New Resource model	√		
School Mass	√		
RSE		√	

EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE	FOR ALL	FOR SOME	FOR FEW
Pastoral Care Structure	√		

Care Team Meetings	√		
Guidance Counsellors x3	√		
Guest Speakers	√	√	
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	√		
SENO for each year group, NEPS	√		√
SPHE	√		
Home / school Communication	√		
School Refusal - school attendance strategy.			√
Awards Day.	√		
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.	√		
Wellbeing Week	√		
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits, CAT4 Entrance Tests		√	
Reach and other Access Scheme SETU Library, DARE HEAR			√
Wellbeing Programme	√		
SEN - New Resource model		√	
Guest speakers timetabled for 5 th and 6 th Years with other years invited on rotation. 5 th Year Guidance class runs each term.	√	√	
Guidance timetabled for TY, 5 th Year LCA and all 6 th Years. 5 th LCA and 6 th Years are timetabled are timetabled for 1 hour of Career Guidance weekly in a Computer Room. TY Career Guidance runs for half of an academic year.		√	
3rd level Open Days & Appropriate Destination Options		√	
EAL			√
CAT4 (6 th Class Entrance Tests)	√	√	
Transition Year: CAT4 Level E, Subject choice (1:1 Guidance Interviews, Presentation Night by GC, SETU Board games, Subject Coordinator presentations by all subjects), Mock Interviews and Work Experience	√		
TY/LCA/LCVP: CV, Mock Interviews and Work Experience	√		
Use of ICT in Guidance		√	
Cross Curricular	√		
STEM	√		
Peer Tutoring		√	
LCVP		√	
LCA		√	
JCPA, OAL		√	
Study skills - students & parents. Resilience	√		

Resilience workshop	√		
Options for 6 th Years: CAO, EUNICAS, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, UCAS, Further Education Courses, Tertiary Degree, HEAR/Dare, SUSI and other options Evening		√	
Open Nights. Parent/ teacher meetings	√		
Information Nights - 3 → 4, 4 → 5		√	
Ukrainian Breakfast		√	√
Wellbeing Week	√		
Multicultural day	√		
Book Week	√		
Resilience Talks and ICT Workshops for 1 st Years	√	√	
International Students		√	

CAREER GUIDANCE	FOR ALL	FOR SOME	FOR FEW
Pastoral Care Structure	√		
Care Team Meetings	√		
Guidance Counsellors x3	√		
Guest Speakers		√	
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	√		
SENO for each year group, NEPS	√		√
Subject Teachers provide overview LC Subjects in TY	√	√	
International Women's Day	√		
SPHE	√		
Home / school Communication	√		
School Refusal - school attendance strategy.			√
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.	√		
Wellbeing Week.	√		
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits, CAT4 Entrance Tests	√		√
Reach and other Access Scheme, Library, SETU. NUI and other university Language Exemptions		√	√
Extra- curricular	√		
Wellbeing Programme	√		
SEN - New Resource model		√	
Guidance timetabled		√	
Open Days for 3rd level & Appropriate Destination Options		√	
EAL			√

TY, CAT4 Level F (TY), Mock Interviews, Work Experience		√	
Use of ICT in Guidance		√	
Cross Curricular	√		
STEM	√		
LCVP		√	
LCA		√	
JCPA, OAL		√	
Study Skills - students & parents. RESILIENCE	√		
CAO Evening Options for 6 th Years: CAO, EUNICAS, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, UCAS, Further Education Courses, Tertiary Degree, HEAR/Dare, SUSI and other options Evening		√	
Open Nights. Parent/ teacher meetings	√		
Information Nights - 3 → 4, 4 → 5		√	

	1			2		
	ALL	SOME	FEW	ALL	SOME	FEW
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits	√					
Awards Day.	√			√		
CAO Evening						
Care Team Meetings	√			√		
Ceannaire.	√			√		
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.						
Cross Curricular	√			√		
EAL			√			√
Encounter						
Extra- curricular	√			√		
Guest Speakers	√			√		
Guidance Counsellors	√			√		
Guidance timetabled						
Home / School Communication	√			√		
Information Nights - 3 → 4, 4 → 5						
International Women's Day	√			√		
JCPA, OAL	√			√		
LCA						
LCVP						
LGBTIQA+		√			√	

3rd Level Open Days & Appropriate Destination Options						
Open Nights. PT Meetings	√			√		
Other Agencies -SHY, SWAY, Rape Crisis Centre, Squashy Couch			√			√
Pastoral Care Structure	√			√		
Peer Tutoring		√				
Positive Mental Health Week.	√			√		
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	√			√		
Reach Access Scheme SETU Library, DARE HEAR						
RSE		√			√	
School Refusal - School Attendance Strategy	√		√			√
SEN - New Resource model		√			√	
SENO, NEPS	√		√	√		√
SPHE	√			√		
STEM	√			√		
Study Skills -Student & Parents. Resilience	√			√		
TY, CAT4, Mock Interviews, Work Exp.						
Guidance - use of ICT						
Wellbeing Programme	√			√		
	3			4		
	ALL	SOME	FEW	ALL	SOME	FEW
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits						
Awards Day.	√			√		
CAO Evening						
Care Team Meetings	√			√		
Ceannaire. Programme						
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.						
Cross Curricular	√			√		
EAL			√			√
Encounter						√
Extra- curricular	√			√		
Guest Speakers	√			√		
Guidance Counsellors	√			√		
Guidance timetabled				√		
Home / School Communication	√			√		
Information Nights - 3 → 4, 4 → 5	√			√		
International Women's Day	√			√		
JCPA, OAL	√			√		
LCA			√	√		

LCVP							
LGBTIQA+		✓			✓		
3rd Level Open Days & Appropriate Destination Options				✓			
Open Nights. PT Meetings	✓			✓			
Other Agencies -SHY, SWAY, Rape Crisis Centre			✓			✓	
Pastoral Care Structure	✓			✓			
Peer Tutoring		✓			✓		
Positive Mental Health Week	✓			✓			
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	✓			✓			
Reach Access Scheme SETU- SETU Library, DARE HEAR							
RSE		✓			✓	✓	
School Refusal - school attendance strategy.			✓			✓	
SEN - New Resource model		✓			✓		
SENO, NEPS	✓		✓	✓		✓	
SPHE	✓			✓			
STEM	✓			✓			
Study Skills -Student & Parents . Resilience	✓			✓			
TY CAT4, Mock Interviews, Work Exp.				✓			
Guidance - use of ICT				✓			
Wellbeing Programme	✓			✓			
		5			6		
		ALL	SOME	FEW	ALL	SOME	FEW
1st Year Interviews - induction, primary school links & visits							
Awards Day.	✓				✓		
CAO Evening					✓		
Care Team Meetings	✓				✓		
Ceannaire		✓					
CPD - Professional & Personal Wellbeing for staff.							
Cross Curricular	✓				✓		
EAL			✓				✓
Encounter		✓					
Extra- curricular	✓				✓		
Guest Speakers	✓				✓		
Guidance Counsellors x 3	✓				✓		
Guidance timetabled	✓				✓		
Home / School Communication	✓				✓		
Information Nights - 3 → 4, 4 → 5	✓						
International Women's Day	✓				✓		
JCPA, OAL							
LCA		✓				✓	

LCVP		√			√	
LGBTIQA+		√			√	
3rd Level Open Days & Appropriate Destination Options	√			√		
Open Nights. PT Meetings	√			√		
Other Agencies -SHY, SWAY, Rape Crisis Centre			√			√
Pastoral Care Structure	√			√		
Peer Tutoring						
Positive Mental Health Week	√			√		
Post Holders - SEN, Year Heads, Wellbeing	√			√		
Reach Access Scheme SETU Library, DARE HEAR						√
RSE		√			√	
School Refusal - School Attendance Strategy	√		√			√
SEN - New Resource model		√			√	
SENO, NEPS	√		√	√		√
SPHE						
STEM	√			√		
Study Skills -Student & Parents . Resilience	√			√		
TY, CAT4, Mock Interviews, Work Exp.						
Guidance - use of ICT	√			√		
Wellbeing Programme	√			√		

9. Delivery of Guidance through the timetable, using ICT and other resources.

This information is documented in the 'g plan' at the end of this plan.

10. Delivery of Personal Counselling (Arrangements/ protocols/ record keeping)

This information is documented in the 'g plan' at the end of this plan.

11. Whole School Guidance Calendar 2025-26

Career-related Guest Speakers every Monday in the Library. Sample of Calendar is subject to change.

September 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
26	27	28	29	30
Year Group Inductions with Guidance and DP Career Talks				
1	2	3	4	5
UCAS Lunchtime Classes		Career Talks 6th Year	Reach Induction SETU	

8 UCAS Lunchtime Classes	9	10 UCAS Lunchtime Classes	11 TY P/T Meeting	12
15 UCAS Lunchtime Classes School Mass	16 3 rd Year Study Skills talk	17	18 Higher Options	19
22	23	24	25 3 rd Year Study Skills talk	26

October 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
29	1	2	3	4
6 UCAS Lunchtime Classes	7 CAO Evening	8 3rd Year PT Meeting	9 Solas Expo TY	10
13 UCAS Lunchtime Classes UCAS Deadline-MED, DENT, OXFORD, Cambridge 1st Year Open Night	14	15	16 1 st Year Open Night UL Trip 5 th Years	17
20 UCAS Lunchtime Classes	21	22	23 SETU Reach Group Meeting	24
27 Mid Term Break	28 Mid Term Break	29 Mid Term Break	30 Mid Term Break	31 Mid Term Break

November 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
			6 6 th Year PT Meeting	7 SETU WCFE Open Day
10	11	12	13	

17 Christmas Exams	18 Christmas Exams 6 th – LCVP Talk	19 Christmas Exams	20 Christmas Exams	21 Christmas Exams
24 UCAS Lunchtime Classes	25 1 st – CSI Lismore Workshop 4 th – Interview Preparation 6 th – NUI Maynooth Talk	26	27	28

December 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
1 CAT4 TY	2 CAT4 TY	3	4	5 Closed
8	9 6 th – Red Hat Talk	10	11	12
15 6 th Year Show	16 6 th Year Show	17 5 th – EUNICAS Talk 6 th – EUNICAS Talk	18	19

January 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
5	6	7	8	9
12 1 st – Study Skills Workshop Key Conversations 1 st Year Talk	13	14 6 th – LCVP Interviews Field Trip UL Business Talk	15	16
19 4 th – Senior Cycle Information Night Well-Being Week: 1 st – Dog Therapy All students – Moving Meditation All staff – Yoga	20 Well-Being Week: All Junior Students – Smile A Mile All Students – Mindfulness Meditation 3 rd – Laughter Yoga 4 th – Christina Noble Coffee Morning 5 th – Parent Teacher Meeting	21 5 th Year PT Meeting	22 Well-Being Week: All Senior Students – Smile A Mile, Mindfulness Meditation, Zumba 5 th – Resilience Workshop	23 St. Angela’s Day All staff & students – Mass Entrance Tests Cat 4 (Sat 24 th)
26 4 th – Work Experience	27 4 th – Work Experience	28 4 th – Work Experience	29 4 th – Work Experience	30

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February 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
				31 4 th – Work Experience
2 4 th – Work Experience 6 th – Mock Exams	3 4 th – Work Experience 6 th – Mock Exams	4 TY-LC Information Night	5 4 th – Work Experience 6 th – Mock Exams	6 4 th – Work Experience 6 th – Mock Exams
9 6 th – Mock Exams	10 6 th – Mock Exams	11 6 th – Mock Exams	12 6 th – Mock Exams	13 6 th – Mock Exams
16 MID-TERM BREAK	17 MID-TERM BREAK	18 MID-TERM BREAK	19 MID-TERM BREAK	20 MID-TERM BREAK
23 TY Work Experience	24 TY Work Experience	25 TY Work Experience	26 2 nd – Parent Teacher Meeting TY Work Experience	27 TY Work Experience

March 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
2 TY Work Experience	3 TY Work Experience 3 rd Yr TY Information Night	4 TY Work Experience	5 TY Work Experience	6 TY Work Experience
9	11 1 st – Parent Teacher Meeting	12	13	14
16 Closed	17	18	19	20
23		25 1 st Year PT Meeting		27
30 Easter Holidays	31 Easter Holidays			

April 2026

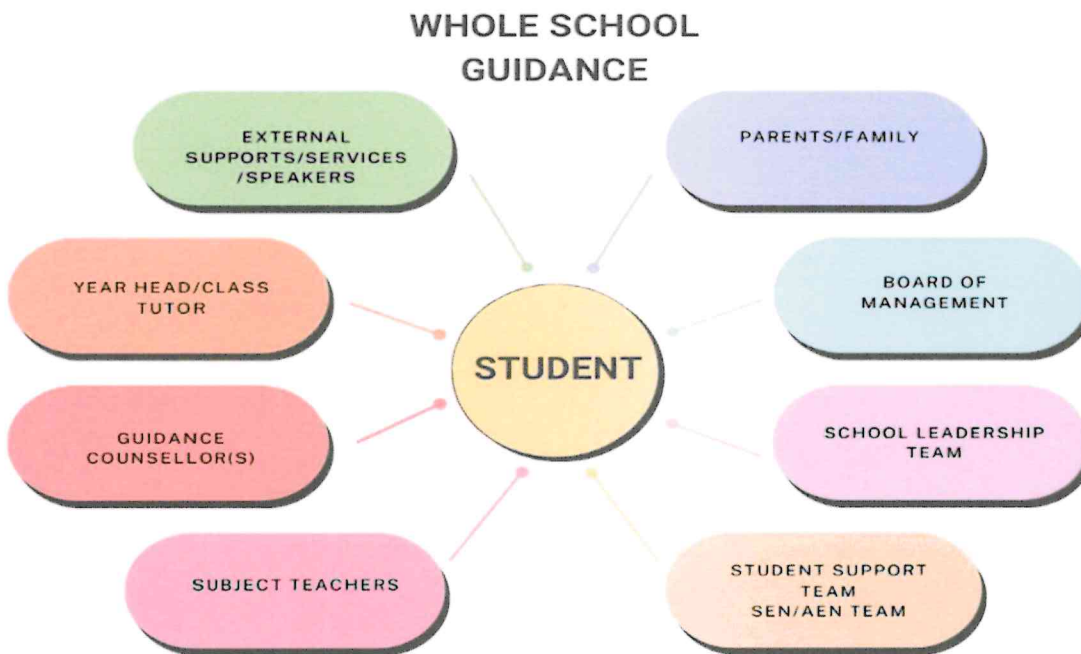
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
		1 Easter Holidays	2 Easter Holidays	3 Easter Holidays

6 Easter Holidays	7 Easter Holidays	8 Easter Holidays	9 Easter Holidays	10 Easter Holidays
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30 Awards Day	1

May 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20 6 th Year Graduation Mass	21 TY Graduation	22
25 Summer Exams	Summer Exams	Summer Exams	Summer Exams	Summer Exams

12. Roles and Responsibilities



Students

Guidance at St. Angela’s School is student-centred, placing the student’s right to participate in and benefit from education at the heart of our approach. Our aim is to empower students to take personal responsibility for their behaviour and learning, while appreciating the value of being active, responsible members of our school community. Students play a vital role in fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect that supports teaching and

learning. Through the Student Voice initiative, they have the opportunity to express their opinions and engage in the daily life of the school.

Subjects such as Wellbeing, SPHE, RE, PE, and CSPE address many aspects of personal and social development, helping students to understand their own needs and challenges, and to learn how and where to seek advice and support. In line with our whole-school approach to guidance, students are encouraged to approach any member of staff with their concerns.

Parents /Guardians

This plan acknowledges the pivotal role parents and guardians play in supporting their child's growth both at home and within the school. A positive home environment greatly influences a child's attitude toward school and fosters holistic development. It is essential that parents are aware of and actively support this plan, along with other school policies and procedures.

We encourage parents to engage positively in school life, helping to build strong, mutually beneficial links between home and school. The Parents' Association also contributes by hosting talks and workshops that strengthen parents' knowledge and skills.

Parents can participate in the guidance process by:

- Communicating with the guidance counsellor and other school staff.
- Attending relevant information sessions and meetings at school.
- Contributing to the development and review of the school guidance plan.

Subject Teachers

This plan acknowledges the interconnected roles of both formal and informal guidance within our school. Subject teachers hold primary responsibility for the education of all students in their classes and often provide informal advice and support when approached by students.

Subject teachers play a key role in helping students reach their full potential by offering academic support, identifying individual needs, and providing guidance related to their subject areas and associated career paths. In addition, some teachers take on formal responsibilities through leadership positions, pastoral care, coordination roles, or participation in programmes such as SPHE. Their involvement in extra-curricular activities also gives them valuable insight into students' needs.

All subject teachers may consult with the guidance counsellor regarding individual student needs and, when specialist expertise is required, follow the appropriate referral procedures to contact the guidance counsellor, SEN/AEN Coordinator, or Student Support Team.

Board of Management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the provision and practice of guidance within the school meets the highest possible standards. The Board manages the school in accordance with the Education Act (1998) and Le Chéile Guidelines. In line with the Education Act, each school must provide students with "*access to appropriate guidance.*"

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team is responsible for maintaining the highest standards in Whole School Guidance. This includes overseeing the guidance planning process and managing resource allocation in collaboration with the guidance counsellor, school staff, and key partners such as parents.

Guidance Counsellor

The role of the Guidance Counsellor is broad and multifaceted, encompassing personal, social, educational, and career development support for students. According to the *Programme Recognition Framework* (DES, 2016, p.8), typical activities undertaken by a guidance counsellor in a post-primary setting include, but are not limited to:

- Designing, delivering, and evaluating guidance learning and developmental programmes for individuals, groups, and classrooms.
- Developing effective teaching, learning, and assessment strategies for guidance classes.
- Providing individual and group counselling to support personal, social, educational, and career development, including during times of personal crisis.
- Administering psychometric assessments (e.g., ability and aptitude tests, career interest inventories) to aid career decision-making and personal development.
- Collaborating with school staff and management in the planning, delivery, review, and evaluation of the guidance programme and Whole School Guidance (WSG) plan.
- Participating in Pastoral Care and Student Support Team meetings.
- Working with parents and referral agencies to facilitate student development.
- Referring students to external agencies and professionals, as appropriate.

The role requires highly developed interpersonal skills and a high level of reflexivity (NICE, 2012, p.24). Counselling in a guidance context is a key component of the school guidance programme, offered individually or in groups as part of a developmental process, during personal crises, and at key transition points such as moving to further education or employment.

St. Angela's WSG plan allocates specific time for one-to-one counselling and for supporting the Student Support Team (Circulars 0002/2023, 0003/2023, 0004/2023).

The guidance counsellor is a specialist with competencies in:

- Guidance theory and professional practice
- Counselling skills in a guidance context
- Labour market, learning, and career-related information
- Programme design, delivery, and evaluation
- Communication, collaboration, and networking
- Psychometric and cognitive ability assessment (e.g., CAT4)
- Research and evidence-informed practice
- Leadership and management of the guidance service

The ultimate objective of guidance counselling is to empower students to make informed decisions, solve problems, develop coping strategies, and address challenges. Guidance counsellors may work with students on issues that cannot be managed alone or with family/peer support. They also provide referrals to external agencies and maintain a safe

space for students awaiting community supports. All counselling adheres to professional guidelines, including child protection procedures.

This description is not exhaustive. Guidance counsellors may also undertake additional responsibilities, such as serving on the school's Critical Incident Team. Further clarification of roles and responsibilities will be provided under the *National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance: Strategic Action Plan (2024–2030)*.

Whole School Guidance Team

Whole School Guidance (WSG) is a comprehensive approach that touches many aspects of school life. Responsibility for WSG planning and practice does not rest with any single individual in a post-primary school. Instead, a dedicated WSG team should collaborate to support the planning, development, and implementation of the WSG programme and plan.

The WSG Team in St Angela's comprises of the following staff members:

- Guidance Counsellors
- Senior Management Team
- SENCOS

The role of the WSG team is multi-faceted and tailored to the needs of our school. This team plays a vital role in promoting an inclusive and supportive approach to guidance across all areas of school life.

Key responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Designing a WSG plan that addresses the needs of the entire school community for the academic year 2025–2026, using the reflective School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process.
- Overseeing the implementation of the WSG plan.
- Incorporating student and parent voice where possible and appropriate.
- Reviewing and updating the WSG plan through the SSE and Provision Mapping process, ensuring it remains a dynamic document that meets the diverse guidance needs of the school community.

The work of the WSG team encompasses all areas of guidance—personal, social, educational, and career—in line with the definition outlined above. While there may be some overlap or shared activities with other school teams, each team operates within its own terms of reference and remit. To ensure clarity, we have outlined below the roles and boundaries of related teams, such as the Student Support Team and Wellbeing Team.

Student Support Team

The Student Support Team is a central component of the school's support system, responsible for coordinating actions that promote the welfare and wellbeing of all students. It serves as a hub, ensuring coherence across the school's support structures by bringing together the work of various departments and teams, such as:

- Junior Cycle Wellbeing Curricular Planning Team
- Special Education Needs (SEN/AEN) Department
- Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)
- Guidance and Pastoral Care staff

School Management plays a significant role in guiding and supporting the work of the Student Support Team.

The Guidance Counsellor is a core member of the Pastoral Care/Care Team and may use this forum to coordinate and support other teams or initiatives as needed (NEPS, 2021). Guidance counsellors are often the only members of the Student Support Team required to hold a postgraduate qualification in counselling skills. This WSG plan outlines the range of competencies available within the school to support students and describes how internal support structures and referrals to the Student Support Team are managed.

Guidance supports the personal and social development of students within the broader whole-school approach to student welfare and wellbeing. The guidance counsellor may:

- Share information on particular students, as appropriate and within confidentiality limits
- Provide ongoing support or specific interventions for individual students
- Support subject teachers in their work
- Liaise with external agencies
- Act as a link for parents/guardians with concerns about their children
- Coordinate whole-school wellbeing initiatives

SEN Coordinator

The SEN Coordinator is responsible for planning and managing the provision of resources for students with special educational needs and/or additional learning difficulties. Key responsibilities include:

- Liaising with senior management, school staff, parents/guardians, and external agencies.
- Processing applications for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), assistive technology, and RACE accommodations for state examinations.
- Collaborating with school management on timetabling for students requiring additional support.
- Serving as a member of the Pastoral Care/Care Team.
- Working closely with the Guidance Counsellor on processes related to RACE and DARE applications, Irish exemptions, and psychometric, CAT4, and standardised testing.

Pastoral Care Team

At St. Angela's, our Tutor Structure forms the foundation of pastoral care. Each class group is assigned a tutor at the start of the school year. The tutor is the primary point of contact for all pastoral care issues and is regarded as the "go-to" adult for their students.

The Year Head liaises with six tutors/tutor groups and works closely with the Deputy Principal assigned to that year group. Each Deputy Principal has overall responsibility for two year groups:

- Ms. Aoife Maher – 2nd & 6th Years
- Ms. Geraldine Barber – 3rd & 4th Years
- Mr. Ger Cadogan – 1st & 5th Years

Guidance Counsellor Allocation (2025–2026)

- 1st Year – Ms. Power
- 2nd Year – Ms. Kelly
- 3rd Year – Ms. Power

- 4th Year – Mr. Rush
- 5th Year – Ms. Power
- 6th Year – Ms. Kelly

Referral Process - Referrals can be made by students, the pastoral care team, school management, or parents. Students may request appointments with their Guidance Counsellor for a variety of reasons. Appointments can be arranged by:

- Visiting the Guidance Office
- Messaging via MS Teams
- Through staff members (Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Tutor, Class Teacher, or Parents)

In certain circumstances, students may request an appointment with a Guidance Counsellor other than their assigned counsellor through their Deputy Principal.

Similarly, the SEN Team supports specific year groups, with each post holder responsible for two year groups.

Care Team Meetings - Regular Care Team meetings for each year group are held throughout the term. These meetings are attended by:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Head
- Guidance Counsellor
- SEN Post Holder

Visitors/Speakers

Guest speakers are invited by school personnel to support the three key dimensions of guidance—personal and social, educational, and career development. These speakers bring unique experience, knowledge, and expertise to enrich the learning experience for students, staff, and parents.

Guest speaker sessions are designed to complement existing school programmes, subjects, and guidance initiatives, enhancing and reinforcing the provision already in place.

13. Testing and Assessments

Details of all testing procedures are outlined in the 'g plan' and in the SEN policy.

14. Guidance Areas for development

Guidance section on school website to be updated.

Guidance for Junior Cycle, Transition Year and Senior Cycle to be reviewed.

Continue to foster Whole School Guidance across the whole school community.

Strengthen links with internal and external agencies.

15. Links to other policies

- SEN Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Bi Cinealta Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Homework Policy
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Personal Technology Policy
- Student Mother Policy
- School Trips Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Data Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Policy
- Substance Use Policy

16. Outside Agencies/ Organisations

- NEPS
- Tusla
- RACE
- CAMHS
- An Garda Síochána
- Military and Defence Forces
- SENO
- CAO
- HEAR & DARE
- Reach & Access
- Susi
- SHY
- SWAY
- Pieta House
- Barnardos
- Foróige
- St. Brigid's
- St. Vincent de Paul
- TENI
- DES
- Feeder Schools
- Higher Education Institutes
- SETU
- FE Colleges
- WWETB
- Training and Apprenticeship Bodies
- Local Community/ Local Business
- Edmund Rice Summer Camps
- Pobal Project
- Children's Group Link
- NUI
- Meitheal
- Samaritans
- Body Whys

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Chill Out
- Waterford Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre
- IGC Regional Branch and National Service
- Counselling Supervision

17. Communication and Supports

General

At St. Angela’s School, we use VS Ware and Microsoft Outlook to communicate with parents/guardians and students. All staff are provided with a school laptop, enabling access to Outlook, OneNote, Teams, and other IT resources.

There are six computer rooms available for booking by staff when required. In addition, laptop trolleys are available for classroom use, and iPads are provided for EAL students. All classrooms are equipped with projectors to support teaching and learning.

Daily notices are read over the school intercom, and noticeboards and display boards are located throughout the building. A school radio channel broadcasts at lunchtimes. Information is also shared via the school website and a dedicated Guidance website (currently under development). A designated postholder manages external communication through Twitter and local newspapers.

All school staff are familiar with the referral process for the Student Support Team and follow the appropriate procedures if they have concerns about a student.

Inclusive Guidance Provision

Definition of Inclusion:

The term “inclusion” in education policy has been defined in a variety of ways over the past half century. Inclusion can be viewed as part of a dynamic process of change to restructure school systems to increase their capacity to respond to and accommodate the diversity of needs of all learners. Inclusion in education is also seen as making an important contribution to the creation of an inclusive society.

An Inclusive Education for an Inclusive Society (NCSE, 2024).

WSG refers to a school-wide approach to supporting students in their personal and social, educational, and career development. It recognises that all members of staff—including school leaders, teachers, and support personnel—play an important role in this process.

An inclusive approach, based on the continuum of support model (*Guidance for All, Guidance for Some, Guidance for Few*), is central to WSG implementation. This model ensures that guidance provision is tailored to student needs.

Each year, St. Angela’s engages in a provision mapping process to identify the guidance needs of students and parents. This needs-led approach ensures that our WSG plan translates into effective practice. We also incorporate student and parent voice into planning, reinforcing inclusivity and responsiveness.

Inclusive Guidance Practices

We provide guidance information through a variety of formats to cater for different learning abilities and preferences. Guidance counsellors adopt culturally sensitive practices to address the unique needs of students from diverse backgrounds. The Guidance Counsellor is available to all students for support with career, educational, or personal issues.

Programmes and Initiatives

St. Angela's runs programmes and events that reflect the diversity of our school community, including:

- Stand Up Awareness Week
- Wellbeing Week
- Science Week
- Amber Flag Initiative
- Disability Awareness
- College Awareness Week
- Book Week
- Multi-Cultural Day
- International Student Breakfast
- Ukrainian Breakfast

Students with Additional Needs including Sereni

The Guidance Counsellor, as a member of the Pastoral care Team works closely with the SENCO in the school to address student needs across all levels of the Continuum of Support. This may include collaboration regarding testing, RACE and DARE applications, language exemptions, referrals for 1 to 1 counselling, and referrals to outside agencies.

Individualised Career Guidance and Counselling

- One-to-one meetings to explore interests, strengths, and realistic career pathways, taking account of the student's learning profile and pace.
- Use of differentiated and accessible resources (e.g., Easy Read formats, visual supports, simplified course prospectuses). E.g. Art-Therapy, Sand Therapy, Walk and Talk etc, Creative therapies, Tea/Hot Chocolate.
- Shorter, more frequent sessions if concentration or processing is a challenge.

Collaborative Planning and Support

- Liaison with:
 - SEN Coordinator / AEN Team
 - Class teachers / SNA / Learning support staff
 - Parents/guardians

- NEPS or other external professionals
- Contribution to Student Support Files with a focus on transition planning and career development goals.
- Joint planning of transition programmes to post-school options (e.g., PLC, apprenticeships, training centres, supported employment).

Psychometric and Interest Testing – with Adaptation

- Use of appropriate, standardised instruments validated for use with AEN students (e.g., non-verbal reasoning tests, pictorial interest inventories).
- Reasonable accommodations in testing — such as extra time, simplified instructions, or smaller testing groups.
- Professional interpretation of results that emphasises strengths and avoids deficit language.

Transition Planning and Pathways Advice

- Early, structured preparation for senior cycle and post-school transitions, ideally beginning in Junior Cycle.
- Guidance on:
 - DARE scheme (Disability Access Route to Education)
 - HEAR scheme
 - PLC courses with supports
 - Youthreach, NLN, or other FET options
 - Supported apprenticeships and training
 - Assistance with college visits, application forms, and liaising with Disability/Access offices in higher or further education.

Social and Emotional Support

- Counselling support for self-esteem, anxiety, and self-advocacy issues that may accompany AEN.
- Helping students build confidence in disclosure of their needs and awareness of supports available in tertiary education.
- Encouraging development of life skills: organisation, communication, resilience, and help-seeking.

Career Education in the Classroom

- Ensure classroom guidance lessons are inclusive and differentiated:
 - Use of visual aids, assistive technology, and concrete examples.
 - Flexible assessment methods (oral presentations, projects, simplified written tasks).

- Collaboration with learning support teachers to co-teach or adapt guidance lessons when necessary.

Information Sharing and Referral

- Where appropriate, refer students to external agencies such as:
 - Solas/Intreo for training supports,
 - Disability Services in HEIs,
 - EmployAbility Service for supported employment.
- Maintain confidential, GDPR-compliant records of interventions and plans.

Ethical and Policy Framework

All of the above aligns with:

- NCGE: Whole School Guidance Framework (2017)
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN, 2004)
- NCSE Guidelines on Post-School Transition (2016)
- Department of Education Circulars on inclusive education
- IACP/IGC Codes of Ethics (individual-centred, equality-focused practice)

International Students

Depending on the circumstances of their arrival to Ireland, international and/or refugee students may face several challenges as they navigate their educational journey.

Language Barrier: Many refugee students arrive with limited proficiency in English or Irish. Communicating effectively in the classroom can be challenging, affecting their participation, and understanding of lessons.

Cultural Adjustment: Adapting to a new cultural context can be overwhelming. Differences in customs, traditions, and social norms may lead to feelings of isolation.

Trauma and Emotional Well-being: Some refugee students have experienced trauma in their home countries or during their journey. Coping with past experiences while adjusting to a new environment can be emotionally draining.

Educational Disruptions: Many refugee students have faced interruptions in their education due to displacement. Catching up with missed content and adjusting to a different curriculum can be demanding.

Social Integration: Building friendships and social connections can be challenging. Refugee students may feel like outsiders or struggle to find common ground with their peers.

Navigating Bureaucracy: Understanding the Irish education system, enrolment procedures, and available supports can be complex. Navigating administrative processes can be daunting for both students and their families.

Access to Resources: Some refugee families face financial constraints. Access to textbooks, school supplies, and extracurricular activities may be limited.

Teacher Awareness and Training: Teachers need training to understand the unique needs of refugee students. Culturally responsive teaching practices and trauma-informed approaches are essential.

Inclusive Environment: Creating an inclusive atmosphere where all students feel valued and respected is crucial. Addressing stereotypes and promoting empathy can enhance the school environment.

In St Angela’s School, through the provision mapping process and the work of teams, Senior Management Team, the Pastoral care team, Guidance team, Wellbeing team, SEN/AEN team, we endeavour to mitigate these challenges and ensure that students receive the support they need to thrive.

Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

The Guidance Counsellor, as a member of the Pastoral Care Team works closely with the SENCO, in the school to address student needs across all levels of the Continuum of Support.

This may include support with applications for HEAR, DARE, SUSI, RACE (etc). Support for all groups is provided in an appropriate format through large group, small group or 1-1 Guidance and other school support services.

18. Curricular Programmes/Subject Choices

Current Curricular Programmes

The following programmes are currently on offer in St Angela’s School

Junior Cycle

Transition Year Programme

Leaving Certificate Established

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

Junior Cycle

Students are offered the following range of subjects:

Compulsory Subjects	Optional Subjects
English	Art
Irish	Home Economics
Maths	Spanish
History	Music
Geography	Business Studies
Wellbeing (including SPHE, CSPE, PE, Singing, Computer)	Science
Religion	
French	

Leaving Cert Established

The Leaving Certificate Established is a two-year programme where students take at least seven subjects, including Irish. It serves as a pathway to further or higher education. Students study three core subjects and select four additional subjects. Non-exam PE, Religion and Guidance classes are also part of the programme. Guidance classes assist students in making subject choices, and decisions are made in February/March of Transition Year.

Subjects are offered the following range of subjects:

Compulsory Subjects	Optional Subjects
Irish	Agricultural science
English	Art
Maths	Accounting
	Biology
	Business
	Chemistry
	Economics
	French
	Geography
	Home Economics
	History
	Music
	Physics
	Physical Education
	Religious Education
	Spanish

Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) is a two year program that prepares students for adult and working life. It emphasises practical skills, continuous assessment, and vocational education. LCA graduates can pursue further education through Post-Leaving Certificate courses (PLCs), which are pathways to HEI courses, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and National Learning Network opportunities etc.

LCA Subjects
English & Communications
Maths
Irish
Spanish
SPHE
Vocational Preparation & Guidance
Information Technology

Art
Religion
Science
Business
Personal Reflection
PE
Music

Transition Year

- In 4th Year, Guidance Counsellors carry out CAT 4 tests with all students. These are standardised assessment instruments used for various purposes, including Guidance and addressing additional and special educational needs (SEN). They help evaluate students' abilities, skills, strengths, and learning needs. CATS are not interpreted in isolation; other evidence (teacher observations, parental reports, etc.) are considered. In (School), CAT 4 tests contribute to a holistic assessment approach, aiding in understanding individual students' abilities.
- This information is clearly explained to students. We feedback CAT 4 results individually to students and also hold a Senior Cycle Subject Choice evening for parents. Subject teachers give an overview of their subject at a TY assembly.
- SETU TY Subject Choice Board Games morning.
- Additional appointments with GC are offered if students are unsure about subjects.
- TY groups attend SETU College Open Day.
- SETU Try Events.
- Career talks & speakers are offered throughout the year.

Students Changing Subjects

Our school adopts a holistic, whole-school approach to help students make informed subject and programme choices based on their unique skills and talents. At each stage, a clear timeline is provided, including a window during which changes can be made.

Procedure for Changing Subjects:

1. Discuss concerns with the teacher of the subject you wish to leave.
2. Meet with the Guidance Counsellor.
3. Discuss the change with the Deputy Principal (DP).
4. Submit an email or written request to the Deputy Principal, signed by a parent/guardian, confirming the decision.
5. The Deputy Principal will arrange the transfer.

Students Changing Subject Level

Students wishing to change subject levels during the school year (e.g., from Higher Level to Ordinary Level) should:

1. Consult their subject teacher for advice.

2. Consider meeting the Guidance Counsellor to discuss implications (e.g., Third Level requirements).
3. Discuss the change with parents/guardians.
4. The final decision rests with the student and parents/guardians.
5. In some cases, a level change may require a class transfer, organized by the relevant Deputy Principal.
6. Written permission from a parent/guardian is required.

19. Appointments and Referrals

Appointments with Guidance Counsellors

The school's Counselling Service focuses on empowering students by helping them make effective decisions, solve problems, address their behaviours, develop coping strategies, and overcome difficulties. These situations can be resolved through:

- **Personal Counselling**
- **Educational Counselling**
- **Career Counselling**

Counselling is an integral part of the school's Guidance Programme, ensuring that every student has access to appropriate guidance as mandated by the Education Act (1998). The Pastoral Care Team, Year Heads, Senior Management Team (SMT), SPHE Coordinator teachers, and tutors all play essential roles in delivering the guidance program. They collaborate to identify and refer students who may be facing challenges.

Personal Counselling Appointments

Personal Counselling Appointments can occur for various reasons, including:

- Concerns raised by SMT, Year Heads, or subject teachers who refer students to the Guidance Counsellor.
- Referrals made by the SMT.
- Parental concerns about their child's well-being.
- Self-referral by students.
- Referrals from peers.

Students seek counselling for a range of issues, such as anxiety, depression, stress, personal difficulties, decision-making, relationship problems, and so on. Appointments are promptly arranged, and urgent cases are addressed as soon as possible.

Educational Counselling Appointments

Educational appointments can be initiated by students or encouraged by the Guidance Counsellor, Year Heads, or subject teachers. These appointments cover various aspects:

1. CAO/UCAS/PLC/EUNICAS etc Information: Pertaining to students applying to higher education institutions in Ireland or abroad.
2. Subject Choice for the Junior Certificate (JC) or Senior Cycle (SC).
3. Programme Choice.
4. Change in Subject Level or discontinuing a subject: Addressing potential consequences.
5. Study, Organizational, and Time Management Skills

Career Counselling Appointments

Career counselling appointments typically involve:

- Correlating Interests, Aptitudes, and Personality: The counsellor helps students analyse and interpret results from Interest, Aptitude, and Personality Tests to identify suitable career paths.
- College Requirements and Subject Information: Students receive information about college requirements and the necessary subjects, levels, grades, and points for their chosen course or career.
- Job Exploration: Discussions cover specific jobs and provide insights into the profession.
- Future Options After Leaving Certificate: Students explore potential future paths beyond their Leaving Certificate.

To optimize these appointments, students are encouraged to complete a Student Profile Form in advance of meeting with the Guidance Counsellor.

Procedures for scheduling an appointment

To ensure the safe and effective delivery of our guidance programme, we operate a one-to-one appointments system. Students can make appointments via various channels, including MS Teams, after Guidance classes, through the Pastoral Care Team, parental request to Senior Management team or by visiting the Guidance Office. The procedure is explained to 1st Year students and parents/guardians during relevant events. The Guidance Counsellor continually reminds students about accessing the service throughout the year. All three Guidance Counsellors attend year group assemblies to inform students who their Guidance Counsellor is. Location of Guidance Office, how to make appointments and limits of confidentiality is explained to all students.

Participation in counselling is voluntary, and students' choices are respected. For health and safety reasons, the door to the Guidance Counsellor's room has a viewer's window.

Referrals

There are three types of referrals:

1. Referrals to the Guidance Counsellor:
 - Made by Year Heads, subject teachers, SLT, and parents/guardians.
 - Aimed at providing intervention by the Guidance Counsellor.
 - Voluntary participation of the referred student must be respected.
2. Referrals by the Guidance Counsellor:
 - For students needing specialist support.

- The Guidance Counsellor assesses needs and arranges referrals to external agencies (e.g., NEPS, GP, Pieta, St. Brigid's).
3. Any staff member can make a referral to the Guidance Counsellor.

Health and Safety Considerations

Safety and well-being are essential aspects of effective guidance counselling and a whole school approach to guidance provision in St. Angela's

Overarching principles:

Confidentiality

The Guidance Counsellor-student relationship is built on trust and professionalism. To ensure privacy, the Guidance Counsellor:

- Preserves confidentiality by taking reasonable steps.
- Informs students about confidentiality limits.
- Discloses information to third parties when necessary (e.g., to protect students or comply with the law).
- Manages information respectfully and professionally.
- Obtains student consent for investigations/further exploration of their issue

At the initial counselling session, the student is informed about the limits of confidentiality (i.e. what is discussed will be kept in confidence unless the Guidance Counsellor believes the student is at risk, or is a danger to themselves or others.) In such cases, a referral must be made to the appropriate parties through the DLP as is our duty of care to the student.

Procedure for Reporting an At-Risk Student

All members of staff working in St Angela's School are required to complete Child Protection training to ensure that they are familiar with the procedures outlined in

Child Protection Procedure for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2025) available at www.gov.ie.

Further information can be found in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Guidance counsellors operate within professional guidelines including child protection legislation, and are trained to respond appropriately to situations along a broad continuum and refer students on to other supports services and agencies as appropriate.

Data Sharing

Further information can be found in our Data Sharing/GDPR policy.

It is understood to be best practice for guidance counsellors to take note of what was discussed in guidance meetings with students. Guidance-counselling notes contain personal data and, in some cases, may contain special-category personal data as defined in GDPR (e.g. data relating to health, sexuality, religious beliefs etc.).

In collaboration with school leaders, robust processes/procedures have been developed to ensure that records are securely stored by the person in the role of guidance counsellor and that procedures are in place for the transfer of guidance counselling notes.

Guidance Counselling notes

Guidance Counselling notes are stored in a filing cabinet in a locked office to maintain security.

20. The World of Work/ Work Experience

Work experience at the post-primary school level plays a crucial role in shaping students’ future paths. It is an essential part of holistic education that equips students with skills, knowledge, and confidence for their future endeavours. In (School), our work experience programme is set up as follows:

Year Group	Work Experience/Shadowing	Organised By
Transition Year	Visits to local Colleges/Industry/Guest Speakers	TY Programme Coordinator/Guidance Counsellor TY Coordinator Class teachers
	Work Experience Prep for Work Experience	TY Coordinator TY Teachers
LCA	Work Experience Prep for Work Experience Vocational Preparation and Guidance Visits to local Colleges/Industry/Guest Speakers	LCA Coordinator Guidance Counsellor/LCA Coordinator
LCVP	Work Experience Prep for Work Experience Vocational Preparation and Guidance Visits to local Colleges/Industry/Guest Speakers	LCVP Coordinator Guidance Counsellor LCVP Teacher

Teaching, Learning and Assessment of Work Experience

Year Group	Teaching and Learning	Assessment
Transition Year	Preparation for Visits to local Colleges/Industry	TY Diary Feedback in class
	Work Experience Prep for Work Experience	TY Diary Follow up call and email from assigned staff member

Year Group	Teaching and Learning	Assessment
LCA	Preparation for Work Experience Vocational Preparation and Guidance Class Visits to local Colleges/Industry/Guest Speakers	Work Experience Diary Key Assignments (Classroom Guidance) Weekly Oral Discussion about Work Experience Follow up Phone Call
LCVP	Work Experience Prep for Work Experience Vocational Preparation and Guidance Visits to local Colleges/Industry/Guest Speakers	Video Interview Oral Feedback on Work Experience

Links to Business and Industry

- Developing links between schools and business/industry is essential for enriching students' educational experiences and preparing them for the real world. Below are some of the strategies we use in St Angela's School to foster these connections:
- We collaborate with local businesses and industries to provide students with work experience opportunities. These programs allow students to spend time in workplaces, gaining practical insights into various professions.
- Work experience helps students understand the expectations, challenges, and day-to-day operations of different industries.

Industry Visits and Guest Speakers:

- We organise industry visits where students tour workplaces, factories, or offices. These visits expose students to real-world environments and processes.
- Guest speakers from various fields visit schools to share their experiences, career paths, and industry insights. These interactions inspire students and provide valuable information.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships:

- We arrange visits to our colleges of Further Education and Training in WWETB and invite staff from the FET team to give presentations in our schools to on apprenticeship and training options.

Business Partnerships and Sponsorships:

- We have established partnerships with local businesses, chambers of commerce, and industry associations.
- Businesses may sponsor school events, provide resources, or offer mentorship programs. These partnerships benefit both students and the local community. (Eg. AIB)

Curriculum Integration:

- We align some of our curriculum with industry needs. They incorporate practical elements, case studies, and real-world examples.
- For instance, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs often collaborate with tech companies to ensure relevant content e.g. Sun Life, Red Hat.

STEM Initiatives:

- Schools partner with businesses for STEM-related projects, workshops, and competitions e.g. Women in Tech event SETU and I.T. companies.
- These initiatives expose students to cutting-edge technologies, problem-solving, and teamwork.

Career Fairs and Expos:

- School organizes visits to **career fairs** (Higher Options) and SETU Arena events where students interact with representatives from various industries.
- Students learn about career paths, job requirements, and industry trends.
- SETU TRY event participation is encouraged.
- Open Days
- WCFE TY Taster sessions
- Mini Med
- Weekly Career Guest Speakers

The 'g' plan

This Guidance Plan relates specifically to the Guidance service delivered by the Guidance Counsellors.

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 refer to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence to help students develop self-management skills, enabling them to make effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses three interlinked areas:

- Personal & Social Development
- Educational Guidance
- Career Guidance

Personal & Social Counselling

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme and is offered:

- Individually and in groups
- As part of developmental learning
- At moments of personal crisis

Objectives:

- Empower students to make decisions, solve problems, and address behavioural issues
- Develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties
- Explore thoughts, feelings, and available choices
- Provide care and support during the challenges of growing up

Approach:

- Non-judgmental and confidential
- Utilises Person-Centred Therapy, Solution-Focused Therapy, CBT, and pluralistic counselling with a multi-strand focus

Educational Guidance

Educational guidance includes:

- Assistance with transitions:
 - Primary → Post-primary
 - Junior Cycle → Senior Cycle
 - Post-primary → Third level or world of work
- Psychometric testing
- Study skills and examination techniques
- Organisation and motivation
- Decision-making regarding senior cycle programmes and further education

Delivery:

- Individual sessions
- Classroom-based guidance

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 involves psychometric testing, the development of self-awareness and acquisition of information and research skills.

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 that they will apply to their learning and other areas of their life.
- The student will develop techniques for dealing with stress, including stress linked to the world of school, study and exams 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 her in her 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 her options and make critical use of information.
- The student will develop a working knowledge of CAO, UCAS, FETAC (QQI) and other applications.
- The student will have a heightened understanding of the value of work and the labour market.

Guidance Counsellors

- Guidance in St. Angela's is seen as both a whole school concern and a specialist area in which the Guidance Counsellors play a key role.
- The school has two full-time and one part-time guidance Counsellors who co-ordinate the Guidance and Counselling in St. Angela's.
- Guidance meetings and Care Team meetings are held on a regular basis.
- Child protection guidelines are followed and issues of concern are referred to the DLP.
- Guidance Counsellors are part of the care team and critical incident team.
- All Guidance Counsellors have undertaken additional training as outlined below.

Continuous Professional Development

Sinéad Kelly Guidance Counsellor

12 th March 2019	Labour Market Skills Shortages	South East Branch CPD
27 th February 2019	Transgender Conference Tower Hotel	TENI
Sept '18- April 19 (60 hours)	Post Graduate Certificate in Mindfulness, Wellbeing & CBT in Adolescent Counselling	The Mindfulness Clinic
5 th March 2018	Introduction to Children First E Learning Programme	Tusla
9 th February 2018	Introduction to Restorative Practices Workshop 2 days	IIRP Europe
12 th December 2017	South East Regional Skills Forum/ Suir Engineering	Suir Engineering South East Branch CPD
6 th December 2017	Whole Staff CPD / JCT	JCT
12 th November 2017	UCAS Training	Brian Howard
10 th October 2017	Transgender Information Catherine Cross	TENI South East Branch CPD
14 th September 2017	Eunicas	Guy Flouch
March 2017	First Light Bereavement Support	First Light & IGC
13 th March 2017	JCT Training	JCT

March 2016	Friends For Life 2 days training	NEPS Psychology Team & Youth Skills for Life
Jan 16 th & 17 th 2016 (2 days)	Mindfulness as a Therapeutic Intervention	South East Branch Creggan Lodge
Dec 2 2015	Child Protection	SPHE
Oct 9 th 2014	REACH + Programme	The Learning Curve Institute of Guidance Counsellors
Oct 14 th 2011	Role of the SPHE Co-ordinator	Social Personal & Health Education Support Service
April 2011	Self- Harm Awareness Training programme	Regional Suicide Resource Office HSE
2009	Qualifax Training Careers Portal Training	South East Branch
2008	The Be Real Game Training	Education Centre, Drumcondra
2008	ASSIST- Suicide Intervention, Safe Talk Training	HSE

Alice Power Murphy Guidance Counsellor

Sept '18 to date	Advanced Level Entry – Diploma in Integrative Counselling & Psychotherapy	IICP College
11 th May 2018	Child Protection Online Course	PDST
8 th March 2018	Principles in Action & L2LPS	JCT
6 th December 2017	Whole Staff CPD / JCT	JCT
5 th November 2017	Transperance C1 Information Workshop Weekend	TENI
10 th September 2017 (60 hours)	Post Graduate Certificate in Mindfulness, Wellbeing & CBT in Adolescent Counselling	The Mindfulness Clinic
March 2017	First Light Bereavement Support	First Light & IGC
April 2016 (16 hours)	Mindfulness for Teachers	Waterford Teachers Centre
March 2016	Friends for Life	NEPS Psychology Team & Youth Skills for Life
16 th & 17 th January 2016 (9 hours)	Mindfulness as a Therapeutic Intervention	South East Branch
2 nd December 2015	Child Protection	SPHE Support Service PP
24 th & 25 th September 2015	Junior Cycle RSE	SPHE Support Service PP
9 th & 10 th March 2015	Personal Safety	SPHE Support Service PP
18 th October 2014 (6 hours)	Child Protection Awareness Programme	Foróige & National Youth Council of Ireland
11 th October 2014 (6 hours)	Foróige Leader Training Certificate – Level 1 – Foróige Personal Development Training	Foróige

9 th October 2014	REACH Training	Careers Portal
1 st & 2 nd December 2013 (14 hours)	Solution Focused Therapy Training	The Learning Curve Institute of Guidance Counsellors – SE Branch
22 nd & 29 th October 5 th November 2013 (18 hours)	Bodyright: A Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention Programme for young people	The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Ltd.
14 th October 2011	Role of the SPHE Co-ordinator	Social Personal & Health Education Support Service
April 2011	Self- Harm Awareness Training programme	Regional Suicide Resource Office HSE
23 rd & 24 th November 2010	ASSIST- Suicide Intervention, Safe Talk Training	Living Works Education

Barry Rush Guidance Counsellor

September 2024-26 th November 2025	Diploma in Adolescent Counselling and Psychotherapy	Greenane Centre
16 th May 2023	Suicide Training	SafeTalk
7 th November 2023	CAO Conference	CAO
September 2021-June 2022	IGC Group Supervision	IGC
September 2022-June 2023	IGC Group Supervision	IGC
September 2023-June 2024	IGC Group Supervision	IGC
September 2024-June 2025	IGC Group Supervision	IGC
Reach + Training 15 September 2020	Reach + Training	Careersportal

Outside Agencies Liaised with by Guidance Counsellors

- Department of Education and Science
- Higher Education Institutions
- Local Community
- Central Applications Office (CAO)
- Local Businesses
- Garda Liaison Officers
- Feeder Schools
- UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)
- Health Service Executive (HSE) – Tusla
- Social Services
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- EUNICAS (European Universities Central Application Support Service)
- Referral Agencies, e.g.:
 - St. Brigid's
 - Pieta House
 - Rape Crisis Centre

- TENI (Transgender Equality Network Ireland)
- Chill Out
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Foróige
- Barnardos
- SWAY
- SHY
- SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland)

Role of the Guidance Counsellor

1. Counselling

Counselling in guidance empowers students to make decisions, solve problems, and resolve issues in their lives. It may involve:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Educational counselling
- Or a combination of these.

Counselling is a key part of the guidance programme and may be offered:

- Individually or in groups
- As part of developmental learning
- During times of personal crisis

2. Support

The Guidance Counsellor provides support to the extended school community. Referral agencies assist in the personal, social, career, and educational development of students.

3. Assessment

Guidance Counsellors are trained to use and interpret a wide range of psychometric tests and other evaluative instruments to support the school guidance programme. These assessments help with:

- Career and educational planning
- Personal decision-making
- Developing self-awareness

4. Information

Guidance Counsellors assist students in acquiring, interpreting, and using information relevant to their:

- Personal development
- Social development
- Educational development
- Career development

Current Guidance Programme

The guidance curriculum consists of two components:

- Formal
- Informal

Formal Guidance is delivered through:

- Individual contact (personal counselling and career/vocational guidance)
- Classroom guidance (regular classes for senior cycle)

Informal Guidance includes:

- Liaising with teaching staff and management to promote cross-curricular links
- Developing whole-school policy for guidance delivery
- Meetings with parents/guardians as an integral part of the process

Current Guidance Provision

Junior Cycle

1st Year

1st Year induction day module encompasses the following key areas:

Transition to post-primary school, settling in, new friendships, getting involved in extra – curricular activities, organisation, study skills, preparing for the school day, role of the Guidance Counsellor, making an appointment & confidentiality. Induction day is central to establishing a relationship between Guidance Counsellors and students.

Other supports include:

In October of 6th class, incoming first years and their parents/guardians are invited to attend an information Open Evening. There is also an option of appointments for additional advice from Guidance Counsellor and SEN Coordinator.

CAT4 Level E Entrance Test in January.

In April, Parents and Students of 6th class students are invited into school for informal interviews where we learn more about school.

In May, Deputy Principal visits Feeder Schools to learn about needs of incoming First Years students.

Our open-door policy and boundaries around confidentiality are reiterated throughout the day. All 1st Years have access to the Guidance Counsellor throughout the year for organisational help and study skills.

1st Years complete a Study Skills workshop with their Guidance Counsellors, during the year. 1st Year parents are also invited to attend an evening workshop presented by Guidance Counsellors in the first semester on transition to post-primary school, organisation and study skills.

2nd Year

- Classes taken from other teachers to reinforce developmental issues dealt with in SPHE, such as study skills, motivation, values, personal responsibility and mindfulness.
- Liaising with year head, tutor and SPHE teachers.
- Tutor times on issues concerning bullying, courtesy, study and self-management.
- Attend parent teacher meetings.
- Counselling provided as required.

3rd 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 and LCA in January.
- Liaising with year head tutor and SPHE teachers.
- Tutor time.
- Attend parent teacher meetings.
- Counselling provided as required.

Senior Cycle

TY Guidance

TY students receive guidance on subject choices, levels, and career implications, supported by individual CAT testing and follow-up discussions. They have weekly timetabled careers classes, a module on relationships, sexuality, and consent, and access to personal counselling.

Guest speakers from HEIs, careers, and well-being fields contribute throughout the year. TY guidance helps students transition from Junior to Senior Cycle, supporting their personal development and sense of self through structured activities in designated guidance classes.

During career classes, students receive information and engage in activities designed to support their personal, educational, and career development.

These include:

Career Guidance and Testing

- Psychometric testing and personality assessment (e.g., MUSAIC – John Holland)
- Multiple Intelligences theory (Howard Gardner)
- Completion of two interest tests to assist career choice:
 - Qualifax

- Careers Portal
- Career Decision-Making Test
- Centigrade

Study and Research Skills

- Study skills workshops
- ICT guidance websites and research skills development

Further and Higher Education Pathways

- Introduction to third-level education structures:
 - CAO, UCAS, Eunicas, PLC, FETAC, QQI
 - Apprenticeships and Traineeships
 - Defence Forces and Gardaí
- Understanding Career Categories
- National Framework of Qualifications
- College entry systems and points calculation

Special Programmes and Applications

- Mini Med applications (University Hospital Waterford, RCSI, UCC)
- Liaison with SEN Coordinator for RACE applications and additional testing needs (e.g., dyslexia screening, WRAT)

Transition Year Activities

- CAT4 testing with individual feedback before subject choices for 5th and 6th year
- Career investigation linked to work experience, including:
 - Research using internet and college prospectuses
 - Short class presentation
- Two-week work experience programme and debriefing session

Wellbeing and Personal Development

- Coping strategies for anxiety and stress
- Meditation, mindfulness, and healthy lifestyle promotion (diet, exercise, sleep)
- Conflict resolution and recognition of achievements

College and Career Exploration

- Attendance at Saturday open days (encouraged)
- School-organized college open day visits for Senior Cycle students
- Guest speakers on various career areas

Parental Engagement

- Information night for parents on subject choice, LCVP, and LCA

Subject Choice Guidance

- Overview of programmes available at St. Angela's:
 - Leaving Certificate Established
 - Leaving Certificate Applied
- Information on HEIs, Further Education, Traineeships, Apprenticeships, Teagasc, Defence Forces
- Subject-choice workshop delivered by SETU Student Engagement Officer
- Liaison with LCA Coordinator regarding applicants

Practical Career Preparation

- CV preparation, application forms, and cover letters
- Interview skills training and practice, including TY Reflection Portfolio interviews

Individual Support

- One-to-one vocational, educational, and psychosocial counselling as required

LCVP

The Link Module programme is embedded within the Guidance framework as an additional component, designed to complement and strengthen the skills and knowledge acquired through students' guidance experience. LCVP teachers and Guidance Counsellors collaborate closely to provide students with a comprehensive and practical understanding of career planning, enterprise, and the world of work.

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

- Career Investigation is the main task.
- Weekly Guidance class.
- One to one guidance interview.
- Information on progression routes into Further Education (including PLC course options, Apprenticeships, An Garda Síochána).
- Careers Exhibition.
- Work on Qualifax and Careers Portal websites.
- Guest Speakers.
- Presentation and Communication Workshop.
- Exam Techniques.
- Support from Principal, Deputy Principal, Co-Ordinator and Class Tutor.
- Work experience.
- Preparation for work experience and reflection on work experience.
- Social education and enterprise modules.
- Counselling sessions as required.

5th Year Guidance

5th Year students receive ongoing career guidance through:

- Weekly career talks from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

- Regular class visits from Guidance Counsellors (twice per term).
- Individual or small-group counselling as needed.

Building on Transition Year learning, students begin to focus on future study and career options. Additional support is provided for students from disadvantaged or challenging backgrounds through the SETU REACH Junior Access Library Scheme, offering quiet study spaces and introducing further educational opportunities.

Career Class Content

- Exploration of career websites: Qualifax, CareersPortal, UCAS, CAO, EUNICAS.
- Career investigation project with class presentation.
- Completion of interest tests: CareersPortal, Qualifax, Career Decision-Making Test.
- Goal-setting skills development.
- Study skills seminar and planning strategies.
- Overview of third-level structures: CAO, UCAS, FETAC (QQI), Eunicas, Solas.
- Access programmes: HEAR, DARE, REACH, DCU.
- National Framework of Qualifications and points system.
- Attendance at open days (one organized during school time).
- Personal statements and CV preparation.
- Coping strategies: stress management, mindfulness, healthy lifestyle promotion.
- Interview skills revisited.
- ICT use via school website and MS Teams for career updates.
- Vocational and personal counselling as required.

LCVP

The Link Module Programme complements guidance learning. LCVP teachers and Guidance Counsellors collaborate to give students practical insights into career planning, enterprise, and the world of work.

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

- Weekly guidance class and one-to-one interviews.
- Career investigation and progression routes (PLC, apprenticeships, Gardaí).
- Careers exhibition and guest speakers.
- Workshops on presentation, communication, and exam techniques.
- Preparation and reflection on work experience.
- Social education and enterprise modules.
- Counselling sessions as required.

Additional Opportunities: Students are encouraged to use careers office resources, attend career events and open days, and organize extra work experience during holidays.

6th Year Guidance

6th Year students have weekly careers and guidance classes and access presentations from visiting HEI speakers. They are encouraged to attend open days, career fairs, and conferences such as Higher Options, SETU, and WCFE.

Every Leaving Certificate student meets the Guidance Counsellor at least once for vocational guidance, with additional individual or group appointments available as needed. Guidance also includes personal counselling and preparation for transition to third-level education.

Guidance Class Topics

- National Framework of Qualifications.
- UCAS application process and personal statements.
- Completing the CAO form and understanding course choices.
- Points system and calculation.
- PLC and QQI options and application process.
- Grants and scholarships (SUSI), HEAR, DARE, REACH, and other access programmes.
- Accommodation, budgeting, and transition to college life.
- International study options (Eunicas, USA).
- Stress management, mindfulness, and healthy lifestyle promotion.
- CV preparation, cover letters, and interview techniques.
- Study skills and exam techniques.
- Attendance at open days and career fairs (Higher Options, WIT, WCFE).
- Parent information night on post-school options.

Additional Support:

- Guidance Counsellors attend school on Leaving Cert results day and are available during CAO/UCAS offer stages.
- Counselling available as required.
- Students informed of key dates and entry requirements for CAO, UCAS, and QQI.

Counselling and Student Appointment Procedures

Each year, Guidance Counsellors are assigned responsibility for specific year groups. For the academic year 2025–2026, the allocation is as follows:

- 1st Year – Ms. Power Murphy
- 2nd Year – Ms. Kelly
- 3rd Year – Ms. Power Murphy
- 4th Year – Mr. Rush
- 5th Year – Ms. Power Murphy
- 6th Year – Ms. Kelly

Delivery of Personal Counselling:

Personal counselling is provided by the Pastoral Care Team, which includes Year Heads, Tutors, and the Guidance Counsellor, to support students' emotional, behavioural, and developmental needs.

Access to Counselling

- Students may access counselling through self-referral or referrals from teachers, parents, or school management.
- Peer support is encouraged.
- Counselling sessions are arranged by appointment, with cooperation from class teachers.
- Referrals to external agencies are made when necessary.

Areas of Support

Counselling addresses a wide range of issues, including:

- Personal or family difficulties
- Career advice and study skills
- Relationships and peer challenges
- Crisis situations
- Stress, anxiety, and exam pressure
- Self-harm concerns
- Identity and LGBTI issues
- Anger management
- Bereavement
- Social media pressures

Appointment Procedures

- Appointments are scheduled as soon as possible, usually with advance notice to teachers.
- Students typically receive a signed appointment note; alternative arrangements are made for particularly vulnerable students.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is central to the counselling process. All sessions and records are kept private and secure. However, confidentiality may be breached in cases of:

- Risk of harm
- Legal obligation
- Child protection concerns

In such cases, appropriate referrals are made in line with Child Protection Guidelines and in consultation with the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Testing and Assessment

A range of assessment tools are used within the guidance programme to complement academic records and teacher reports, supporting informed decisions about student learning and development.

Assessment of Incoming First-Year Students

- Administered by Guidance Counsellors as part of entrance preparation.
- Assesses verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, perceptual understanding, and reading age.
- Results help create mixed-ability classes.
- End-of-year reports from 5th and 6th class are included in the enrolment process.
- The SEN Coordinator reviews psychological reports, entrance test scores, and liaises with primary schools. Meetings with parents of students with SEN are arranged in collaboration with Guidance Counsellors.

Assessment of Transition Year Students

- Students complete Irish norm-referenced aptitude assessments to measure aptitude in specific subject areas.
- Results are combined with class performance and teacher feedback to guide subject choice and career planning.
- Each student has an individual meeting to discuss results and implications for future learning and career decisions.

Assessments in Senior Cycle

- Interest inventories (e.g., Qualifax, CareersPortal, EirQuest, COA Cambridge) to explore career/course preferences.
- Values questionnaires to identify priorities for future planning.
- Personality profiles to enhance self-awareness.
- Skills and Multiple Intelligence tests to identify strengths.
- Calculation of exam results and prediction of Leaving Certificate points.

Psychometric and Standardised Assessments

Overarching Principles and Definitions

In St Angela's School, the Guidance Counsellors and SEN/AEN Coordinators collaborate closely and adhere to the guidelines set out in Circular 0058/2019, ***Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools.***

The circular details the types of tests administered in schools, and the most appropriately qualified staff to administer these tests.

Types of Assessment Instruments

Standardised ability tests are designed to be curriculum-independent and measure more enduring and long-term traits than the attainment of learning. They measure potential and what a student is capable of knowing rather than what is known.

Standardised attainment tests (sometimes referred to as achievement tests) measure what a student knows and can be used to assess, for example, students' knowledge and skills in literacy and

numeracy, and to determine progress in these areas. On foot of information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, further information may be gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests to provide a more detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.

A diagnostic test is designed to provide specific information about a student's strengths and needs in some aspect of learning, for example, word identification skills or understanding of number concepts. In addition, guidance counsellors may use the outcomes of ability and interest tests to guide and to support students' decision-making regarding subject choice and senior- cycle programme options and to support their career development, including planning for higher education, further education and training, apprenticeships, or work.

Testing across the Continuum of Support

CAT 4 E Level - Incoming First Years- Jan/Feb prior to Sept entry to First Year are used to construct mixed ability classes and are not shared with parents.

CAT4- G Level – Transition Year – Nov/Dec of TY year.

Access to testing is available to students at all levels of the continuum. Through our referrals system, we endeavour to identify emerging and presenting needs of our students and through additional testing, identify how we can support them further. Informed consent is sought before administering any tests, and the purpose of the test is clearly explained to students.

Feedback of CAT4/SEN Testing

We ensure that appropriate, accurate and constructive feedback is provided in a timely fashion to students and parents by appropriately qualified personnel, for example, guidance counsellors or other suitably qualified teachers (SENCO). Students are provided with the opportunity to explore their assessment results in the context of the educational options available to them in the school and to inform their future educational and vocational development, career choices and decision making. Students and parents are also made aware of the limitations of the results of standardised tests during this discussion and the importance of other factors including the students' interests, talents and experiences, and information available from other sources.

Sharing of Data

The results of standardised tests are shared with other relevant members of school staff to plan effectively to meet the educational, emotional, and behavioural and wellbeing needs of the students. It may also be necessary at times to share relevant information with external parties, such as NEPS and CAMHS etc.

Storage & Retention

We are aware of and comply with our obligations relating to access to stored data under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2013, associated regulations, and the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, and GDPR (2018).

Training & CPD for Staff

The administration of ability tests in our school is restricted to appropriately qualified personnel who have been specifically trained in specialised psychometric testing, including the selection and administration of such assessment instruments, interpretation of assessment results, scoring and feedback. Typically, in the case of psychometric instruments of general ability (and individually administered achievement tests), our qualified guidance counsellors or teachers of special education with appropriate qualifications administer these specific tests. We continue to engage in on-going training and continuing professional development, where available.

Study Skills:

The Guidance Counsellor arranges for the delivery of a study skills programme for all students each year.

- 1st Year: Delivered through SPHE as a four-period workshop facilitated by the Guidance Counsellor.
- 2nd & 3rd Year: The Guidance Counsellor delivers study skills at specific times on the calendar in collaboration with other departments. Additionally, SPHE includes a study skills module taught by SPHE teachers.
- 4th Year: Study skills are revisited during dedicated guidance classes.
- 5th Year: Study skills workshops are organized in late September by an external agency (*Matrix*).
- 6th Year: Study skills are reinforced during guidance classes.

Record Keeping:

Record keeping is an essential component of administering the guidance and counselling service. Guidance Counsellors maintain records of counselling sessions and vocational guidance interviews. These notes are stored securely in locked filing cabinets within the guidance offices.

Referrals to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) are kept in a secure location in the Principal's office. Records of tests and test booklets are also stored securely in the guidance offices to ensure confidentiality and compliance with data protection guidelines.

Resources:

- Fully equipped guidance offices with ICT and seating.
- Timetabled guidance classes for senior students in computer rooms.
- Dedicated library section with Irish, UK, and careers publications.
- Guidance notice boards for information display.
- Online and ICT career guidance platforms (e.g. Qualifax, Careers Portal, CAO, UCAS, Eunicas).
- Professional guidance supports, including Child Protection Guidelines, NCGE and IGC resources, supervision, meetings, and AGM participation.
- Printed and digital guidance materials and textbooks for students.
- Career reference books, handbooks, and directories.
- Wellbeing and support programmes.
- Dedicated guidance budget to support services.

Guidance Areas for development:

- Formalise study skills workshops for 2nd and 3rd Years.
- Plan for timing and delivery of CAT4 results.
- Update filing system in the Guidance offices.
- Improve our use of ICT in the classroom.
- Encourage the use of online folders as opposed to paper folders for our students.

Ratified by the Board of Management on: 24-3-2026

Chairperson of Board of Management: Aidan M^s Greath