

## ***Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School***

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# **Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School Whole School Guidance Plan 2023-2024**

Ratified by BOM on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

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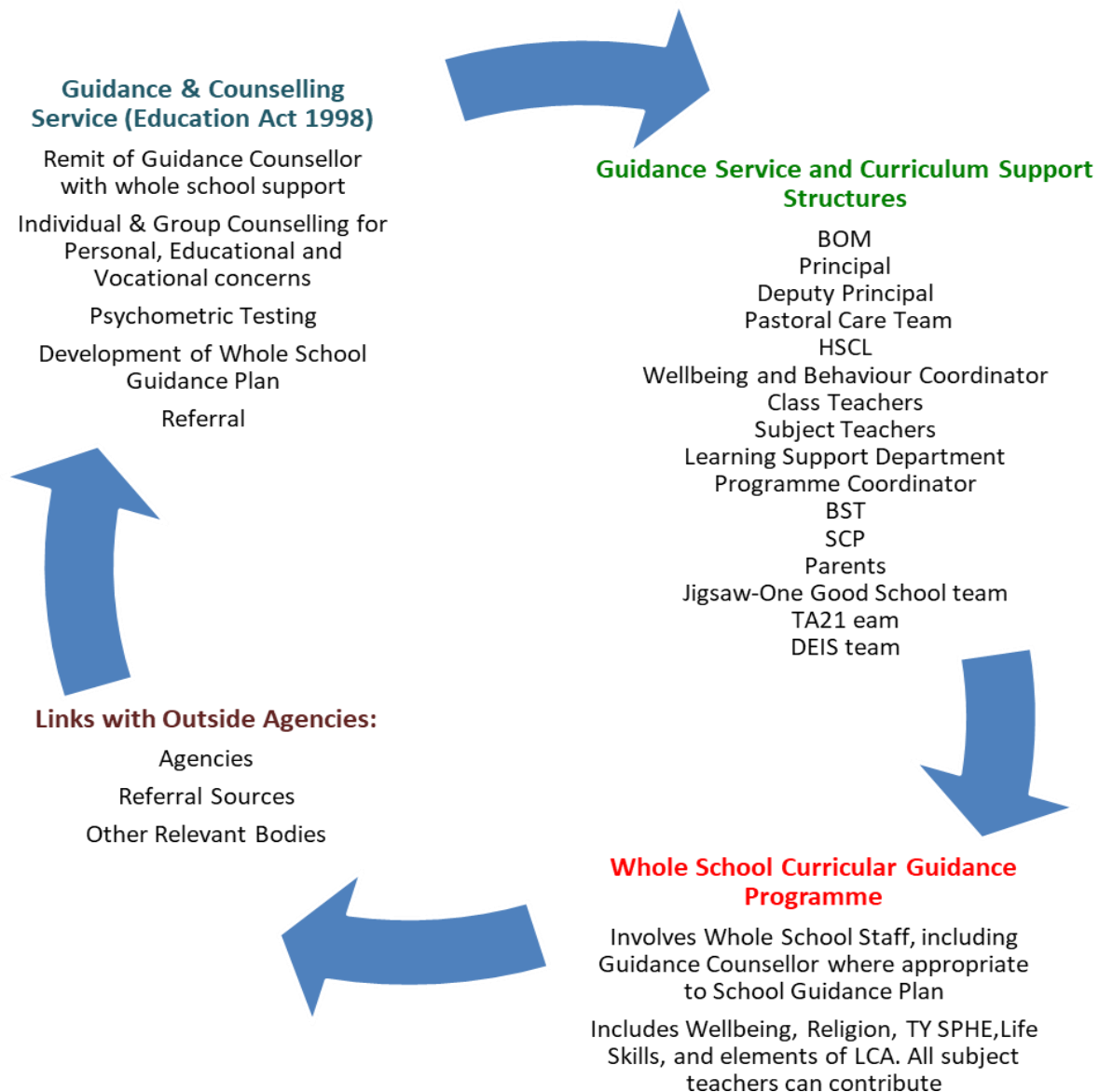
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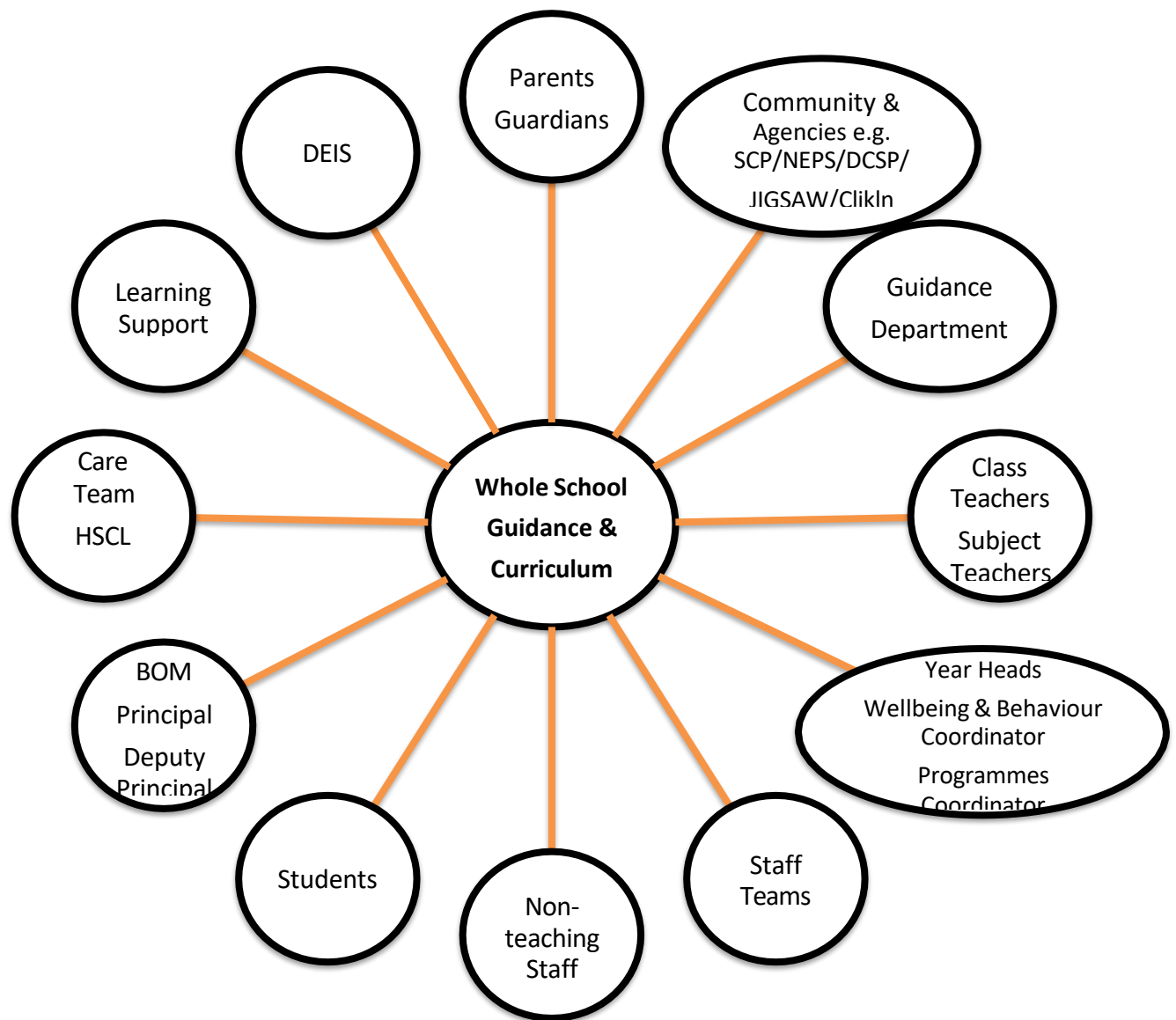
## Index of Abbreviations used in Guidance Plan

|      |                                                 |
|------|-------------------------------------------------|
| BOM  | Board of Management                             |
| DSCP | Dublin South City Partnership                   |
| CAO  | Central Applications Office                     |
| CSPE | Civic, Social and Political Education           |
| DDLp | Deputy Designated Liaison Person                |
| DEIS | Delivering equality of opportunities in schools |
| DLP  | Designated Liaison Person                       |
| GC   | Guidance Counsellor                             |
| HSCL | Home School Community Liaison                   |
| JCSP | Junior Certificate Schools Programme            |
| LC   | Leaving Certificate                             |
| LCA  | Leaving Certificate Applied                     |
| LCVP | Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme        |
| LS   | Learning Support                                |
| NEPS | National Educational Psychological Service      |
| PLC  | Post Leaving Certificate                        |
| SCP  | School Completion Programme                     |
| AEN  | Additional Educational Needs                    |
| SNA  | Additional Needs Assistant                      |
| SPHE | Social, Personal and Health Education           |
| WSGP | Whole School Guidance Plan                      |

## A Whole School Guidance and Counselling Service – Diagram



## Whole School Guidance and Curriculum Support Structures



## **Section 1: Aim of the Whole School Guidance Plan**

### **1.1 Our Lady of Mercy the School Guidance Plan**

The Education Act 1998 requires schools to develop a school plan based on the needs of the school. Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School (OLM) is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of CEIST ([www.ceist.ie](http://www.ceist.ie)). It is a Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) School with a full range of programmes: Junior Certificate Schools' Programme (JCSP), Junior Cycle, Compulsory Transition Year, Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

#### **School Mission Statement**

***"All of the school community will work with care, to develop mature young adults, who will achieve their full potential, who will be ready to deal with the challenges of the modern world".***

#### **Vision Statement**

***"The Sisters of Mercy opened their first school in Drimnagh in 1944. A girls' secondary school was established in 1956 and this became co-educational in 1973.***

***True to the philosophy of our founding sisters, we focus on the full human development of the student, including spiritual, academic and social in a Christian context. We strive to develop mature, confident people with high educational standards, who will be ready to cope with the challenges of the modern world."***

This Whole School Guidance Plan reflects the ethos, CEIST core values and spirit of OLM, and is developed in accordance with the *Education Act, 1998*. Section 9 of this Act states that guidance is an entitlement in post-primary schools that "shall use its available resources to... (c) ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices." Section 9 (C) elaborates further by stating that a school shall 'promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students... in consultation with their parents having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school'. The ethos and spirit of OLM Drimnagh is embodied in the school's mission statement and core CEIST values.

As outlined in the document *Guidelines for Second-Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, Relating to Students' Access to Appropriate Guidance (DES,*

2005), this guidance programme is part of the school plan and will identify the central role of the guidance counsellor as well as presenting the important contribution of many members of staff to the role of guidance.

As emphasised by the *Department of Education and Skills Circular 0009/2012*, guidance is considered a whole school activity that is integrated into all school programmes. It will involve the guidance counsellor primarily; however, the valuable contributions of all other relevant stakeholders of the school are taken into consideration when and where appropriate in planning and delivering the guidance programme.

Guidance in school refers to a range of learning experiences incorporating three separate but interlinked areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance. The objective of counselling is to encourage and support students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, address behavioural issues, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing. Guidance and Counselling aims to lead young people to develop and utilise their talents and abilities, explore opportunities, grow in independence, take responsibility for themselves and make and follow through on informed choices about their lives. This is in line with the school's motto of '*Shaping a Brighter Future for Our Young People*'.

In line with recommendations in *Looking at our School; An aid to self-evaluation in second-level schools*, OLM strives to ensure the availability of guidance to assist all students in making choices and successful transitions in personal, social, educational and career areas. The guidance plan aims to give details of a balanced and effective provision throughout the school. In line with best practice, the Guidance Counsellors participate in continuous professional development regularly (see *Appendix 5*). Referral procedures are adhered to fully at all times to best serve students' needs (see Section 4 for Guidance Procedures).

In developing this Whole School Guidance Plan, OLM has been steered by the models of good practice in school guidance planning as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), the National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) and the School Development Planning Initiative. In addition to this, the plan has been developed within the parameters of the guidelines of the Department of Education and Skills. OLM views the guidance plan as a work in progress and all of the stakeholders to this plan are committed to reviewing and improving this



policy on a regular basis (please see *Appendix 1* for the full list of policies and circulars that inform this Whole School Guidance Plan).

## **1.2 OLM Whole School Guidance Plan partners**

Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School adopts a whole school approach to the guidance service. Consequently, this plan has been drawn up after consultation with teaching personnel, both directly and indirectly involved in aspects of the guidance service. These are known as guidance partners and include:

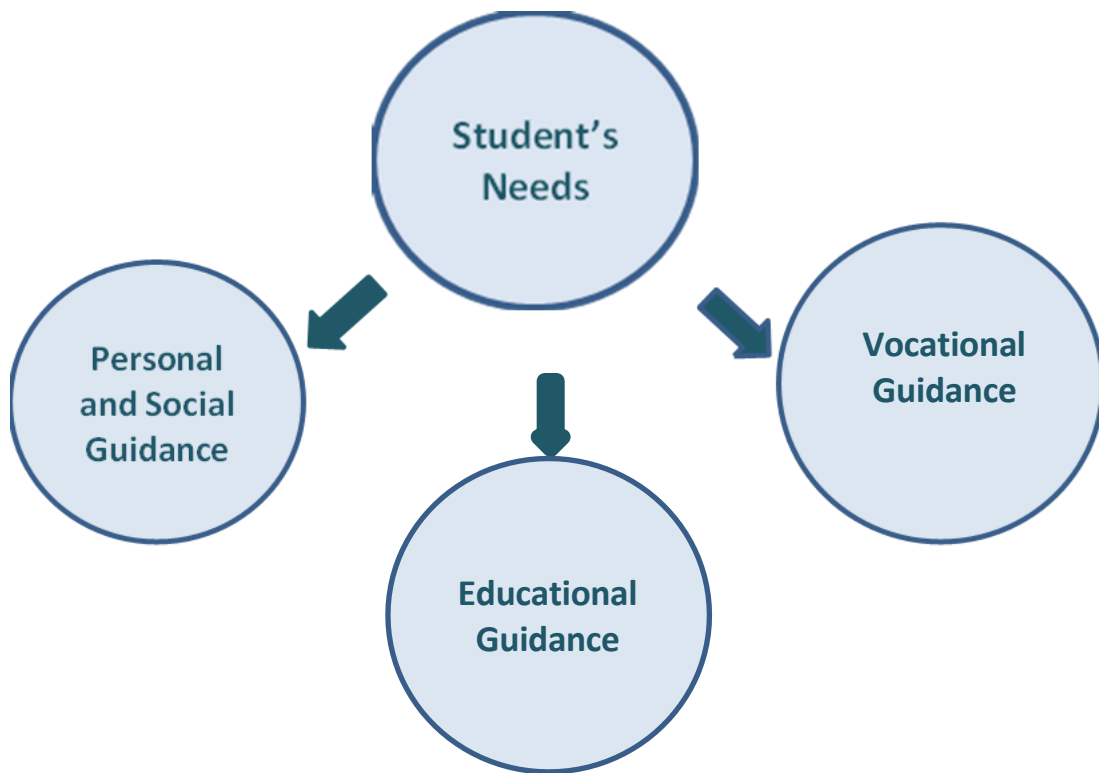
- Guidance Team: Nuala Brady, Roberta Danzi, Alex Murray, Katie Moloney, Maria Aragon Rubio
- Principal: Pádhraic Gibbons
- Deputy Principal: Nuala Brady
- Home School Community Liaison: Christine Cahill
- Year Heads and Class Teachers
- AEN Department: Niamh O'Loughlin, Alison Smith, Ciaran Parker, Rachel Butler, Elizabeth Irwin
- Pastoral Care Team: SC- Pádhraic Gibbons, Nuala Brady, Chris Cahill, Claire Flanagan, Elizabeth Irwin, Roberta Danzi
- Pastoral Care Team: JC- Pádhraic Gibbons, Nuala Brady, Chris Cahill, Rachel Butler, Ruairi Lynch, Billy Sheehan, Roberta Danzi
- TA21 Team: Nuala Brady, Chris Cahill, Roberta Danzi, Alex Murray, Martha Donovan, Claire Flanagan
- One Good School Team: two parents' representatives, four students, four senior management staff members
- LCA Co-ordinator: Martha Donovan
- JCSP Coordinator: Martha Donovan
- TY Coordinator: Martha Donovan
- SPHE teachers
- School Completion Coordinator: Paula Moore

- Representatives from the BOM (Chairperson, two trustee representatives, two parent representatives, two teacher representatives and the secretary of the BOM (Principal).
- Student representatives (6<sup>th</sup> Year students who review the programme)
- Student Council.

Together the guidance partners work hard to promote the ethos of a “*school community*” that “*will work with care.*”

### **1.3 The objectives of the Whole School Guidance Plan in OLM**

The objectives of the Whole School Guidance Plan in OLM are to involve all staff, where practicable in the school guidance service, in an effort to foster in students the skills to make decisions, solve problems, change behaviours and resolve issues in their lives which will allow them to proceed successfully from adolescence to adult life and enable them to fulfil their full potential in life. The provision of guidance in OLM aims to assist students in two major transitions: from primary to secondary education and from secondary to further and higher education. Additional objectives include, but are not limited to, the follow-up and assistance to students after they leave our school, the minimisation of early school leaving, the offer of a comprehensive and age-appropriate programme of educational and vocational information, the development of patterns of personal learning management among students, the provision of individual or group counselling to all students on request or on referral, the development of self-recognition of talents, achievements, strengths and weaknesses, the forging of links with the wider community and involvement of all members of the school community in the process of guidance planning and the delivery of the Guidance Programme. To achieve its objectives, this Whole School Guidance Plan identifies three distinct but interlinked areas whereby guidance counselling is provided:



Source: National Centre for Guidance in Education, [www.ncge.ie](http://www.ncge.ie)

### 1.2.1 Personal and Social Development

Personal and Social Development includes developmental skills that are critical to the students' education and careers, including:

- Self-awareness, to have a clear idea of their strengths, interests, abilities and passions
- Self-confidence and self-efficacy
- Personal effectiveness skills
- Interpersonal and social skills
- Decision-making skills
- Organisational and planning skills
- Resilience and problem-solving skills
- Coping strategies

### 1.2.2 Educational Guidance

Educational Guidance is developmental; guidance is provided in order for the students to develop:

- Study techniques

- Research and information building skills
- SMART Goal setting skills
- Time management skills
- Motivation and learning
- Stress management skills

### 1.2.3 Vocational Guidance

OLM provides Vocational Guidance to ensure the students:

- Investigate career options and opportunities
- Explore further and higher education options
- Learn about the world of work and job opportunities
- Prepare for job interviews
- Create plans for their future
- Understand the CAO system, PLC and apprenticeship programmes and be able to make informed decisions about their future
- create and develop a well formatted Curriculum Vitae with clear, relevant and useful information
- Create a cover letter template
- develop and practice interview skills.

### 1.2.4 Additional Objectives

Additional objectives of this Whole School Guidance Plan include:

- Keeping parents/ guardians informed about all aspects of their child's guidance
- Evaluating student needs with regard to the school guidance service in partnership with staff and school management
- On-going monitoring, evaluation, planning and review of OLM's WSGP. Guidance is described as the student support systems and programmes in place in a school. As these programmes require regular review and updating to ensure continued relevance to the ever-changing needs of the student in our school, this Whole School Guidance Plan and the purpose of this folder should not be viewed as a finished document, but as a work in progress (SDPI, 'Article: Planning the School Guidance Plan', p.1). For more details on the WSGP evaluation and review, please see Section 8 of this document.

## Section 2: Current Guidance Provision and Programme

### 2.1 OLM's Current Guidance Provision

The organisation of the curriculum and the direction of each student's course of studies is the responsibility of the Principal in consultation with teaching staff.

The following programmes are offered to students in OLM:

- Junior Cycle (JC)
- Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)
- Compulsory Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate Established (LCE)
- Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

#### 2.1.1 Junior Cycle (JC)

During the first three years, students are preparing for the Junior Cycle Certification. In-coming first year students are offered the full range of subjects that are available in the school at Junior Cycle. These subjects include:

| 1st Year Core Subjects                                                                                                                                           | Option Subjects, Wellbeing and Short Courses                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pastoral Care (5 by 8min check and connect each morning).<br>Core Subjects:<br>English<br>Irish/Irish/LS<br>Maths<br>RE<br>Science<br>Art<br>History<br>Business | Option Subjects:<br>French/Spanish<br>Geography<br><br>Wellbeing:<br>Wellbeing PE- Short Course<br>Wellbeing CSPE-Short Course<br>Wellbeing SPHE- Short Course<br>Wellbeing Life Skills<br><br>Short Courses:<br>Climate Action                  coding |
| 2nd Year Core Subjects                                                                                                                                           | Option Subjects                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Pastoral Care (5 by 8min check and connect each morning).<br>Core Subjects:<br>English<br>Irish/Irish/LS Maths<br>RE<br>Science                                  | Option Subjects:<br>French/Spanish<br>Music/Geography<br>Wellbeing:<br>Wellbeing PE<br>Wellbeing CSPE<br>Wellbeing SPHE                                                                                                                                 |

|                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| History<br>Art<br>Business                                                                                                                                     | Short Course:<br>Climate Action      coding                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>3rd Year Core Subjects</b>                                                                                                                                  | <b>Option Subjects</b>                                                                                                                                                             |
| Pastoral Care (5 by 8min check and connect each morning).<br>Core Subjects:<br><br>English<br>Irish/Irish/LS<br>Maths<br>RE<br>Science<br>History<br>Geography | Options Subjects:<br>Tech/Business<br>Spanish mixed/French-mixed<br>Music/Art<br><br>Wellbeing:<br>Wellbeing PE<br>Wellbeing CSPE<br>Wellbeing SPHE<br><br>Short Course:<br>Coding |

Students study approximately ten subjects for their Junior Cycle Certification. Students or class teachers/tutors on behalf of students can refer to the guidance counsellor for advice and information regarding subject choice and its implications for third level and college/career entry.

For some students, the Level 3 Junior Cycle may not be accessible due to specific learning difficulties. OLM offers the Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP). Students complete the majority of the L2LP during everyday lessons with their class group. Teachers adjust their expectations of students' ability and record evidence so that these students can achieve at Junior Cycle and progress to Senior Cycle. The Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LPs) guidelines cover learning, teaching, and assessment for students with General Learning disabilities in the low mild to high moderate range of abilities in first, second and third years in post primary school. These students will benefit from an L2LP as it purposely focuses on development and learning in such areas as elementary literacy and numeracy, language and communication, mobility and leisure skills, motor-coordination, and social and personal development.

The new Junior Cycle pathway for students with additional educational needs is also being implemented in OLM; there are currently two students taking L1LPs focusing on priority learning units (communication, language and literacy, numeracy, personal care and wellbeing, being part of a community, the arts, physical education).

### 2.1.2 Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)

The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) is particularly targeted at junior cycle students who are identified as being at risk of early school leaving, perhaps without completing Junior Cycle. The programme aims to provide a curriculum framework that assists schools and teachers in making the Junior Cycle more accessible to those young people who may leave school without formal qualifications. All JC students partake in this programme.

The JCSP attempts to help young people experience success and develop a positive self-image by providing a curriculum and assessment framework suitable to their needs. On completion of the programme students receive a profile which is an official record of their achievements from the Department of Education and Skills.

### 2.1.3 Transition Year

The Transition Year Programme is a unique one-year programme that promotes the personal, social, vocational, and educational development of students and prepares them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society. TY provides a bridge to enable students to make the transition from the more dependent type of learning associated with Junior Cycle to the more independent learning environment associated with Senior Cycle. It encourages the development of a wide range of transferable critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills. Over the course of Transition Year, students get the opportunity to experience all available subjects through a modular timetable. Students are encouraged to try activities and subjects that they may not have previously considered. Transition Year is compulsory in OLM, to give all students the opportunity to grow and mature and equip students with information and skills and enable them to make well informed decisions regarding:

- Which Leaving Certificate best suits their needs and abilities
- Which subjects they may need to choose at LCE depending on where they wish to progress after OLM
- Deciding on whether their progression route involved third level, further education, or the world of work

Transition Year also aims to help students be more responsible for and take ownership of their learning, its purpose is to develop confident, competent, and independent thinking young

people and to create enthusiasm for learning and a greater autonomy in the students' own learning. The Transition Year Calendar is based on Work Experience and Significant Learning Experiences and Sessions.

#### Work Experience:

All students will complete work experience one day per week.

- Students and their employer keep a record of their experience.
- Mentors check in with students and employers to ensure attendance and to chart students' progress.
- Credits are awarded for work experience.

#### Significant Learning Experiences:

- These can be off-site activities or Additional workshops organised for the students in school.
- Students may experience the Significant Learning Experiences as a class group or a year group depending on the suitability of the activity.
- These experiences will act as practical aid to what is being taught in the classroom.
- Details of these experiences are posted in the school calendar insofar as possible.
- We do our best to begin and complete each TY year with a major significant event such as a bonding trip or overnight trip.

#### Sessions:

- Depending on the number of classes in each TY group there will be two or three sessions.
- Students receive tasters of as many subjects as possible on a timetable that are rotated either once (two sessions) or twice (three sessions).
- The sessions are important as it allows students to sample modules and subjects that might otherwise be taught at Junior or Senior Cycle.

#### Additional opportunities for TY students include:

- A wide variety of extra opportunities are available to Transition Year students throughout the year.
- Students will be encouraged to participate as much as possible.



- Descriptions of these opportunities are explained to students and texts sent to parents encouraging students to make the most of these Additional opportunities they might not otherwise be given.

#### 2.1.4 Leaving Certificate Established

The Leaving Certificate Established programme offers students a broad and balanced education while allowing for some specialisation. The certification is used for the purposes of selection into further education, employment, training, and higher education. It is a two-year, mainly academic programme that is exam-focussed. Students complete seven subjects for their Leaving Certificate in OLM. This is to ensure that their top 6 subjects are counted towards the CAO points system for university, should they have applied for a 3rd level course. Most subjects have some coursework element, whether it be practical, oral, or written task. These are completed over two years. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) examines written assessments at the end of 6th Year.

All students complete the following core subjects and can choose four optional subjects from the following list:

| Core Subjects                                                           | Choice Subjects                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Irish (unless they have a specific exemption)<br>English<br>Mathematics | Art<br>Biology<br>Business<br>Design & Communication Graphics<br>Geography<br>History<br>Home Economics<br>Modern Foreign Language<br>(French/Spanish)<br>Music |

These are the subjects in which they will be assessed by the SEC.

Students' wellbeing and opportunities to progress are very important at senior cycle. All senior

cycle students are timetabled for careers lessons, where they can explore their options about where they wish to go after school. They also complete P.E. and R.E. lessons to allow the time in school dedicated to their physical and mental wellbeing.

The Guidance Service has a significant role in subject options for Senior Cycle. Students study three core subjects and choose another four other subjects. This choice is generally decided in Transition Year.

### 2.1.5 Leaving Certificate Applied

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) is a self-contained two-year programme that is aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. Students in LCA are given one vocational guidance class per week in 5th Year and one vocational guidance class per week in 6th Year as an element of Vocational Preparation and Guidance. The Guidance Service works very closely with the LCA coordinator in relation to supporting students in making the right decision about which Leaving Certificate to choose.

LCA is designed for students who do not wish to continue directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the other two-year leaving certificate programme or who choose not to opt for those programmes. More vocational in its approach than LCE, the LCA course is an excellent end of school qualification for those who may wish to progress immediately to the world of work, apprenticeships, or College of Further Education. It also allows students to progress to 3rd level so long as they complete a Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Course first.

All students wishing to apply for a place on the LCA programme must attend a meeting with the LCA coordinator and Guidance Counselling Team. Prior to students being informed about the programme, parents are invited to a Senior Cycle options evening. Parents of all potential LCA students are provided with further information on the programme; this happens by either a phone call or a meeting, to ensure they are fully aware of the choice being made by their son/daughter. Students complete a number of Key assignments during each session and have 7 tasks (projects) to complete over 2 years. It is continuously assessed and having 90% attendance is a major part of this course. Subjects are as follows:

- English and Communications
- Mathematical Applications
- Gaeilge (Irish) is covered in 5th year

- Italian is covered in 6th year
- Vocational Preparation: Guidance, Job Search, Enterprise 1& 2, Work Experience 1, 2&3, Community Work, Work and Living.
- Hotel Catering and Tourism (specialism)/Horticulture (Specialism)
- Arts- Visual Art
- Introduction to Communication and Technology (ICT) in 5th Year
- Information and Communication (Elective)
- Craft and Design (Specialism)
- Social Education
- Leisure and Recreation

Students are awarded credits and grades as follows:

- PASS: Students need 60% to pass: 120 credits
- MERIT: 70% to get a Merit: 140 credits
- DISTINCTION: 85% to get a Distinction: 170 credits

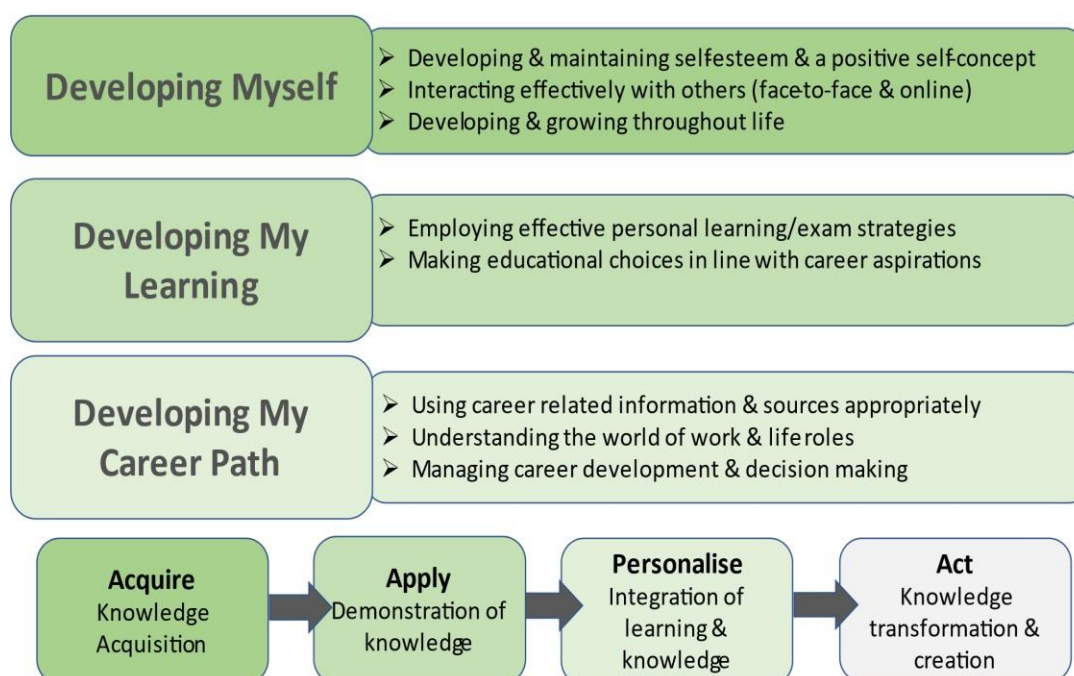
## 2.2 Current Guidance Programme in OLM

### 2.2.1 The Whole School Approach

Guidance is perceived to be a continuous process of support and care from 1<sup>st</sup> Year to 6<sup>th</sup> Year and therefore it must consist of continuity and progression from year to year. The curriculum focuses on the three guidance domains: the personal, the educational and the career domain. Each curriculum focus is subdivided into a number of broad topics, each of which is treated under the headings:

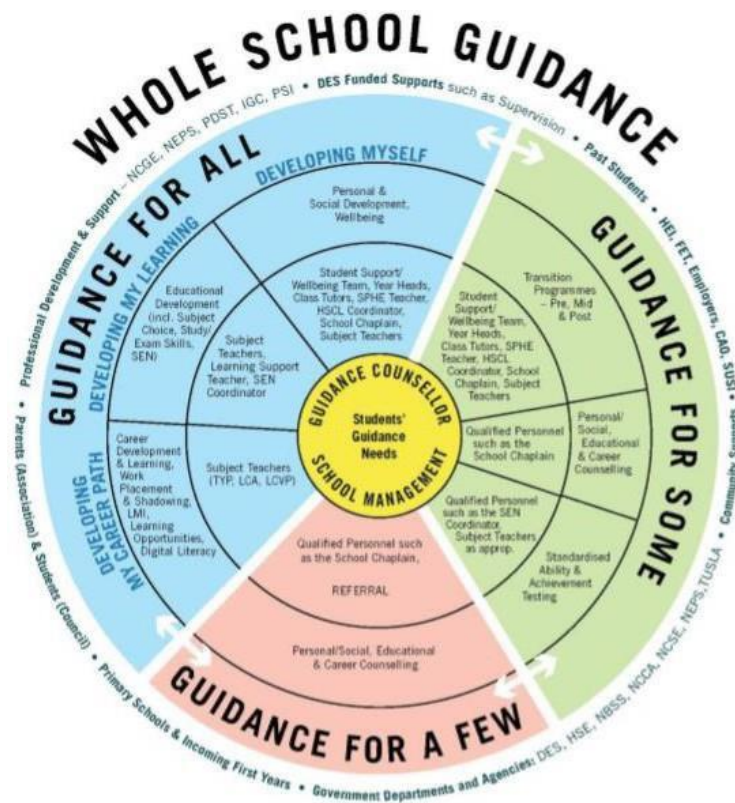
- Areas of Learning
- Dispositions, Values, Attitudes, Skills Developed
- Learning Outcomes
- Skills Development in Related Subjects and Programmes.

The curriculum framework reflects the importance of students *“striving to reach their potential”* in a *“spiritual, academic and social in a Christian context”*. This is achieved through the provision of information and guidance of a broad range of topics and skills, and in terms of student access to guidance across all the years of post-primary education.



National Educational Psychological Services, *Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools, Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention* (2013), pgs. 8-9.

The National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) acknowledges the important role school has in promoting wellbeing and mental health for its students. It published guidelines on mental health promotion and suicide prevention for whole school guidance, which OLM's Guidance Department adopts. NEPS 'continuum of support model' is used within OLM's Whole School Guidance. The Continuum of Support Model is described as 'a framework for schools to employ in supporting the emotional, behavioural, social and learning needs of all students – school support for all (general needs), school support for some (milder needs) and school support for a few (more complex needs)'<sup>2</sup>. The Continuum of Support Model is briefly demonstrated in the image below.



NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework, pg. 14.

In applying the continuum, the Whole School Guidance Programme aims to meet the needs of students along a continuum, from a whole school approach to group and individualised approaches. The continuum model can be applied to guidance as follows:

#### *2.2.1.1 Guidance for All*

This is provided to all students to support personal & social, educational, and career development, and students making transitions (incoming First Years, Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle and from Senior Cycle into apprenticeships, FET, HE, and employment). The guidance counsellor as the specialist has a key role to play in coordinating the planning and delivery of the whole school guidance programme and in the provision of guidance to students. A whole school approach is employed in delivering the learning and teaching activities of the school guidance programme which include, career education programmes, SPHE and Wellbeing in Junior Cycle, guidance modules and work experience/placement provided as part of senior cycle programmes (TYP, LCA and LCVP). The NEPS publication '*A Continuum of Support for Post- Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers*' (2010) outlines whole school approaches that can be employed in relation to 'Support for All'.

#### *2.2.1.2 Guidance for Some*

Provided to specific groups of students to support personal & social, educational and career development and transition making. Such groups of students will typically include, for example, students in senior cycle, especially 6th year, who will benefit from group and one-to-one guidance counselling to support educational and career decision making, and students who are making transitions. Transition points include primary school into first year of post-primary education, junior cycle to senior cycle, and school to higher/further education and training, apprenticeships and employment. Some students may require additional and more intensive support in making transitions. Group/one-to-one guidance counselling will require the expertise of specialist school staff, such as the guidance counsellor working in collaboration with the student support team, SPHE teacher, Year Heads, and class tutors. The NEPS publication '*A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers*' (2010) outlines a Solution Oriented Framework that can be employed in relation to 'School Support (for some)'.

#### *2.2.1.3 Guidance for Few*

Students may require support in meeting their developmental needs and when they experience personal crises. Some students may also require more intensive support as they make transitions (including transitions for Early School Leavers (ESL) and to education centres such as

YouthReach) and important decisions during their time in post-primary schools. This support will require the expertise of specialised school staff with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competences to respond to the needs of these students and will involve the guidance counsellor, and other school staff who have been trained in meeting the needs of vulnerable students and those who may have additional needs. If the student requires more intensive support, referral to external agencies and supports should be employed. In the event of a protracted referral the guidance counsellor/staff member may need to provide continued support to the student. The NEPS publication 'A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers' (2010) outlines supports which can be provided to students with more complex or enduring needs under 'School Support Plus (for a Few)'.

### 2.2.2 Junior Cycle

The guidance counsellor is paramount for the transition of primary school students to secondary school education, but also throughout the Junior Cycle and the whole school. The importance of guidance in Junior Cycle, to all students from first year to third year, is pointed out in the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines. The Wellbeing Guidelines states that 'Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community' (*Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2017, pg. 17*). The Guidelines highlight wellbeing as a whole school endeavour. Six indicators of wellbeing are presented in the guidelines - 'active', 'responsible', 'connected', 'resilient', 'respected', and 'aware'. Guidance is highlighted as supporting 'learning about wellbeing and learning for wellbeing' for all students in Junior Cycle and is regarded as one of the main pillars for developing the Wellbeing programme in schools (*Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2017, pgs. 46-48*). The 'Framework for Junior Cycle' presents twenty-four Statements of Learning, eight Principles and eight Key Skills that are at the core of the new Junior Cycle. Guidance provision can be informed by 'Framework principles such as Continuity and Learning to Learn, key skills such as Managing Myself and a number of statements of learning, especially those linked to making decisions' (*Framework for Junior Cycle, Department for Education and Skills, 2015, pg. 25*). Under the Framework, OLM will deliver subjects, short courses, Wellbeing, and a range of other learning experiences (*Framework for Junior Cycle, Department for Education and Skills,*



2015, pg. 7). The DES highlights that guidance provision may be included in the 400 hours available for Wellbeing and that activities related to guidance can be delivered through other learning experiences also. The Guidance Counsellors' role in the school with Junior Cycle students and their collaboration with Junior Cycle teachers is important as revealed in both the 'Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines' and '*Framework for Junior Cycle*', and a whole school guidance.

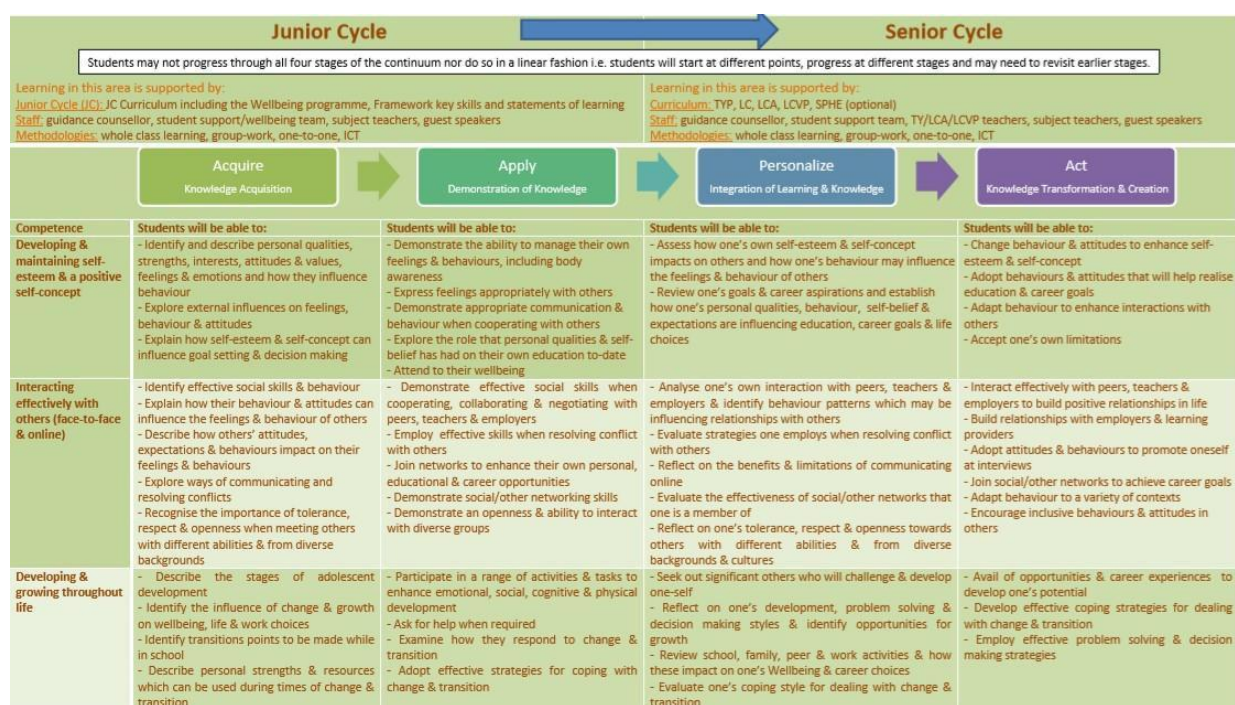


**Junior Cycle Key Skills**

In addition, members of the Guidance Team and SPHE teachers play an important role in the delivery of numerous parts of the SPHE programme. For example, the learning outcomes of 'Developing Myself' in SPHE contains a four-stage continuum of learning where students 'acquire', 'apply', 'personalise', and 'act' on knowledge. Guidance-related topics are



completed as part of SPHE, e.g. developing myself, developing my learning, developing my career path; the NCGE resources are used. From first year to sixth years, students learn the competencies of developing & maintaining self-esteem & a positive self-concept, interacting effectively with others, and developing and growing throughout life. Learning through this area is supported through the Guidance Counsellor and fellow staff members. A full break down of the four-stage continuum of learning in the 'Developing Myself' is demonstrated below.



### 2.2.3 Senior Cycle

At Senior Cycle, the Guidance Counsellor seeks to help students develop an awareness and acceptance of their talents and abilities; to explore possibilities and opportunities open to them; to grow in independence and to take responsibility for themselves; to make informed choices about their lives and to follow through on those choices. The Guidance Programme at Senior Cycle aims to assist the full development of each student's potential, to help the student grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem and to prepare him or her for higher or further education, training and or employment.

## 2.3 Guidance activities in OLM

The DES outlines the following as the activities of a Guidance Counsellor, which can include (DES, 'Programme Recognition Framework: Guidance Counselling, Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers' (March, 2016), pg. 8):

- Designing, delivering, and evaluating guidance learning and developmental programmes relating to personal and social, educational and career development for individual, group and classroom settings
- Developing effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies for the guidance class
- Providing individual and group counselling to facilitate personal and social, educational and career development and at moments of personal crisis
- Providing labour market, learning and career-related information through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and blended learning approaches
- In collaboration with key personnel, including the course co-ordinator, assisting with planning of workplace learning and growing links with the wider business community, agencies, and voluntary sector
- Using psychometric tests (i.e., ability and aptitude tests and career interest inventories) to facilitate career decision-making and personal development, and to support learning and educational choices (*DES Circular Letter 0035/2017, pg. 4-6*).
- Providing support to, and working in collaboration with, school and management and staff in the planning, leading, delivery, review and evaluation of the guidance service/programme and the Whole School Guidance Plan
- Working with parents (as appropriate) and referral agencies in facilitation of the personal, social, educational and career development of students and service users
- Provision of supported counselling interventions, to include group and individual
- Establishing close ties with feeder schools, where appropriate, and with centres of further education and training and higher education.

The nature and range of guidance activities specific to Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School are outlined below and are based on the premise that Guidance is both a whole school concern and a specialist area within education. The Guidance activities that assist OLM's students to make choices include (There are just some examples below, all guidance activities in school are

mentioned later in the curriculum plans which detail the current guidance programme for each year within the school):

- **Counselling.** This involves helping students to explore their thoughts and feelings and the choices open to them. Care and support are given to students learning to cope with the many aspects of growing up. A former Guidance Counsellor of the school offers 1-to-1 support to students referred by the Care Team. Where a young person's problem is outside that of the remit of the Guidance Counsellor, then she is responsible for **referring** the student to a more specialised service outside of the school. This counselling service is supported by the Pastoral Care Team weekly meetings which include the Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Year-Heads and Home School Liaison Officer. At these meetings the team discusses students at risk who could potentially benefit from individual/group counselling and try to make provisions to improve the child's situation.
- **Assessment and Advice.** The Guidance Team will meet both TY and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students individually to discuss their career options regarding subject and course choices. Parents are invited to attend these meetings if they wish. Ms. Brady is registered with the Psychological Society of Ireland and is qualified to administer and score psychometric tests ethically.
- **Information.** The Guidance Team provides students with objective, current and factual data on education and training opportunities and challenges, labour market information and entitlements. Trends, opportunities, and challenges in the labour market are discussed and evaluated. This information is provided upon request by members of the school community. Noticeboards containing relevant and important information for students are situated along the corridors and outside the Careers office. Students are exposed to websites such as <https://careersportal.ie/>, [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie), [solas.ie](http://solas.ie), [apprenticeship.ie](http://apprenticeship.ie), [careernews.ie](http://careernews.ie), [www.nto.heai.ie](http://www.nto.heai.ie) and [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie), the universities' and colleges' websites and become familiar with publications like the CAO booklet and the universities' and colleges' prospectuses. College Prospectuses are ordered, stored, and dispensed to students from the guidance suite. Students can attend career days of their choice and school talks from guest speakers from colleges of Further Education, Institutes of Technology and Universities during the year. All 6th Year students attend the Higher Options event and all year groups attend the WorldSkills event in the RDS.

The Guidance Counselling Team members speak at Parent Evenings in relation to the role of Guidance in the school and provide information to parents regarding 3rd level opportunities available to their children.

- **Educational Development Programmes.** These involve facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to study, examination performance, choices of subjects and levels. The Guidance Team speaks to all 1<sup>st</sup> Year students at the beginning of the academic year about subject choice and to Transition Year students during the year about the same. The team provides information regarding the Senior Cycle LCA and LCE programmes which are currently on offer in OLM. A study skills seminar for exam year groups is organised each year to reaffirm and to refocus students on utilising their learning skills. In general, all teaching staff continuously remind and provide advice to students about the importance of study every year. The house exams are organised in a similar manner to the state exams, and this helps prepare students for the real state examinations when they arise. The SPHE Programme contains modules which deal excellently with the topic of Exam Preparation. Therefore, all staff collaborates to ensure that all students are receiving the best possible educational support.

**Other Guidance Activities** support the achievement of the objectives of the school. These include:

- **Consultation** with parents, school staff and students. The Guidance Counsellors are members of the Pastoral Care Team. The following school personnel attend these meetings once a week: Year Heads, Home School Liaison Officer, Deputy Principal and Principal. The Guidance Counsellors attend all parent-teacher meetings and is available for consultation with parents.
- **Feedback.** This involves giving feedback to school management and staff on the needs of individual students, groups, and the school as an organisation, and how the School Guidance Programme has supported students' choices and transitions through their education. The Guidance Counsellors are in constant contact with the Resource Department so that the guidance needs of students attending resource are met. The Resource Department provide feedback on individual student progress in subjects, and this helps the Guidance Counsellors when advising students who are in the process of making choices in relation to subject/levels/college courses. The Guidance

Counsellors receive a copy of any reports on students regarding their psychological needs which is safely kept in the student's file.

- **Networking** involves establishing links with employers, relevant agencies, and institutions to enhance guidance work with students. As a member of the IGC, the Guidance Counsellors liaise with local Guidance Counsellors in other schools during supervision sessions and branch meetings. The Guidance Counsellors attend the IGC conference every year to ensure access to the most recent progressions in Guidance and Counselling. The Guidance Counsellors liaise with school representatives from universities and third level Colleges (including Colleges for Further Education) to provide students with information on new courses or any changes to existing courses and entry requirements. As TA21 Trinity Access Liaison Officers, the Guidance Counsellors ensure that students receive all relevant information regarding a range of activities/programmes which occur throughout the year so that students become familiar with third level education in Trinity. The Guidance Counselling Team liaises with members of the JAP Ireland (Junior Achievement Programme) so that representatives from different enterprises in Dublin deliver a six-week programme to class groups in OLM. They teach them about the world of work, helping them to set goals, plan for their future and learn the skills necessary to succeed in a fast-changing world (The TA21 and JAP initiatives will be explained in more detail in the section below entitled Guidance as part of DEIS).

## **2.4 Planning for students with Additional needs**

Each individual student's needs are assessed by the Additional Needs Team and these needs are communicated to the Guidance Counsellor. All psychological reports are copied by the AEN and given to the Guidance Team to insert into a student's file. When speaking the AEN students individually during their guidance meeting, the Guidance Counsellors make them aware of the DARE and AHEAD organizations that are there to help them at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. They work through the DARE applications with students in Sixth Year.

## **2.5 Planning for a culturally diverse society**

Ms. Danzi provides guidance for those students who are from different countries. She is on hands in helping foreign students to decide on their subjects for Senior Cycle and is sensitive and mindful of the diverse backgrounds of these students when doing so.

## **2.6 Guidance activities for each year**

### **2.6.1 Guidance for First Years**

- Assist in the organisation of school entrance assessment and CAT4
- Visit National Schools to meet principal and teachers to discuss needs of students enrolled in OLM Drimnagh
- Students who enrol late are also assessed in the same manner
- Administer, with the assistance of AEN Department, school entrance assessment to 6th class students at the end of January
- This information assists in identifying any cognitive or behavioural difficulties so that a range of structures may be put in place to enable the student to get the best possible support in secondary school. We also look at how we can support students who may have an emotional difficulty or may need some extra care when transferring to OLM Drimnagh
- Guidance Counselling Team visits 1st Year classes during the first few weeks to explain the role of the Guidance Counsellor and to see how they are settling in. Students are encouraged to speak with their class teacher (who will liaise with Guidance Counsellor) if they are experiencing difficulties. Guidance Counsellors meet with students where necessary. The GC attends the coffee morning for incoming 1st Year Parents
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the Guidance Team, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to an external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- The Guidance Team attends the 1st year parents' meeting where parents are given in overview of what school will be like: curriculum, student journal, homework, student supports, attendance and school rules and regulations etc. Guidance Counsellors also gives input on the Guidance & Counselling Service in the school
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Junior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk
- Guidance Counsellors liaise with the SPHE department for the roll out of well- being

from day one and consistently through the year. Guidance Counsellors are involved in initiatives such as Friendship Week

- The Guidance Team attends weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Guidance Counsellors organises Career Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attends parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance activities, e.g. study skills, group counselling, goal setting and exam preparation are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- First Year students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- The NCGE Guidance Module for 1<sup>st</sup> Year is delivered in Life Skills Lessons or SPHE.

#### 2.6.2 Guidance for Second Years

- Guidance Counsellor meets students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellors, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Help with study skills, organisational skills, time management and motivation are available
- With Year Head, identify suitable students, to participate in Scholars Ireland programme
- Guidance Counsellors attend 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- Liaise with Junior Achievement Ireland, and appropriate subject departments, for their 2<sup>nd</sup> Year educational programme
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Junior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and

Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk

- Guidance Counsellors liaise with the SPHE department. Guidance Counsellors are involved in initiatives such as Friendship Week
- The Guidance Team attend weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Guidance Counsellors organise Career Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- The NCGE Guidance Module for 2nd Year is delivered in SPHE Lessons
- Guidance activities are rolled out to second year students as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- Second Year students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- Skills to Succeed Programme is completed with one 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Class Group.

### 2.6.3 Guidance for Third Years

- Guidance Counsellors meet students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly in order to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellors, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Students are encouraged to, and shown the value of, studying, being motivated, setting goals, and doing after school study. The importance of homework and revision is stressed for Junior Certificate success.
- Guidance Counsellors attend 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- The Guidance Team liaises with Transition Year Coordinator at the of school year for any organisational needs of the new TY year
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Junior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCEP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk



- Guidance Counsellors liaise with the SPHE department. Guidance Counsellors are involved in initiatives such as Friendship Week
- Attend weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Third Year students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- Guidance Counsellors organises Career Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance activities are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- The NCGE Guidance Module for 3rd Year is delivered in SPHE Lessons
- Third Year students attend a Study Skills Seminar.

#### 2.6.4 Guidance for Transition Year

- Guidance Counsellors meet students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly in order to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellors, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Senior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk
- Attend weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Guidance Counsellors organise Career Awareness Week initiatives for November
- TY students will be involved in coordinating things on this day
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance Counsellors attend TY Parent-Teacher Meeting
- Each TY student has one period of Careers per week
- Students will receive CV preparation and prepare for work experience

- Guidance activities are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- Important TY Topics to be covered: Job Search Skills, Health & Safety, Report on Personal Report on Work Experience Placement, Career planning: Career interest Inventory, Self-Assessment Exercises, Career Investigation
- Students will have opportunity to participate in college programmes such as Computing Week in DCU and Look into Law in TCD
- Transition Year students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- Guidance Counsellors liaise with Junior Achievement Ireland for their TY Programmes
- Maintain close contact with Trinity Access for their TY initiatives
- Select student for the Law Society of Ireland programme
- Liaise with ClickIn for programmes they run for TY students, such as working in media at NewsTalk
- TY students take part in mentoring with ClickIn
- TY students take part in the One Good School activities, e.g. Let's talk, sure why not?, My mental health, what helps?, peer-delivered mental health workshop, managing exam stress, innovate for wellbeing, peer education programme, wellbeing committee
- Friendship week / Wellbeing week: Initiatives organised for students
- All TY students receive a mock interview during College Awareness Week
- Guidance Counsellors invite guest speakers in throughout the year
- CAT4 tests are conducted on TY students in late February early March for senior cycle subject options and class grouping
- Each student is given a career appointment with the guidance counsellors where the results of the CAT4 tests are discussed
- Guidance Counsellors regularly meet with TY Coordinator and Work Experience Coordinator
- Leaving Certificate Established and Leaving Certificate Applied is explained to all students
- Guidance Counsellors, with Deputy Principal, interview students about leaving certificate choice.

### 2.6.5 Guidance for LCA

- Guidance Counsellors meet students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly in order to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellor, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Senior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk
- Attend weekly AEN Department Meeting
- LCA students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- LCA students complete work experience once a week both in year 1 and year 2
- Guidance activities, e.g. study skills, goal setting and exam preparation are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- Guidance Counsellors organise Career Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance Counsellors attend Sixth Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- Each LCA student has one period of Careers per week
- Information on job growth areas, employment opportunities and trends are explored
- Visiting Speakers from Colleges and Professional Bodies
- Students will receive CV preparation and prepare for work experience
- Information on progression routes into Further Education (including PLC course options, and Apprenticeships)
- Work on Qualifax and Careers Portal Websites
- LCA students will receive a mock interview

### 2.6.6 Guidance for Fifth Year

- Guidance Counsellors meet students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellors, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Individual consultation with student who are having difficulty in Senior Cycle – particularly those who are not happy with the subjects they have chosen
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Senior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk
- Attend weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Guidance activities are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- Fifth Year students attend the yearly WorldSkills event in the RDS
- Guidance Counsellors organise College Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance Counsellors attend Fifth Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- Career Awareness Week November initiatives are organised
- Each Fifth-Year student has one period of Careers per week
- Fifth Years receive one Careers class a week
- Students are introduced to Further Education- visits to DCU and NUI Maynooth
- Students are introduced to information on courses, college prospectuses, the points system, CAO, UCAS, PLCs, course and college requirements, FETAC, Apprenticeships / SOLAS, TEAGASC, Garda, Defence Forces, Prison Officers, Banks, Civil Service, Airline industry, etc.
- Students will visit third level institutes

- Guest Speakers from colleges will talk to 5<sup>th</sup> Years
- Students focus on study skills, motivation, target setting, organisational skills, preparation for transition to 3rd level. Interview and presentation skills developed. Strategies for coping with longer exams
- Fifth Year students attend a study skills workshop
- Information on job growth areas, employment opportunities and trends are explored.

#### 2.6.7 Guidance for Sixth Years

- Guidance Counsellors contact former Sixth Years to check in on them and see where they are at regarding work or education
- Guidance Counsellors meet students who are struggling to settle back into school, particularly students who faced a crisis during the summer
- CAT4 tests are administered on any new students. New students are met regularly to ensure they are settling in well
- Students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or educational difficulties are referred to the guidance counsellor, through class teacher, year head and or management. Different counselling strategies are used depending on the nature of the problem. Some students may be referred on to external counsellor or other appropriate agency should the need arise
- Guidance activities are rolled out as part of the DEIS Plan, particularly in relation to retention, attendance, examination assessment and educational transition
- Guidance Counsellors attend weekly Senior Support Team with Year Heads, HSCP, and Management, to identify, plan and support potential students at risk
- Attends weekly AEN Department Meeting
- Guidance Counsellors organise College Awareness Week initiatives for November
- Guidance Counsellors attend parent-information evenings with management
- Guidance Counsellors attend Sixth Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
- Maintain regular contact with the Trinity Access team
- Each Sixth-Year student has one period of Careers per week
- Information on job growth areas, employment opportunities and trends are explored
- Information is given on the National Framework of Qualifications, CAO System, HEAR

and DARE

- Support for target- setting, motivation, organization, anxiety, and stress management available
- Each student is given at least one forty-minute career planning/educational guidance session
- Sixth Year students attend a study skills workshop
- Visiting Speakers from Colleges and Professional Bodies
- Attendance and Participation at various Careers Events, such as Higher Options, WorldSkills and Open days
- When the Leaving Cert results come out, and the CAO offers are made, the guidance counsellor is available to meet with students and their parents
- Promote engagement in student led service activities as a means of contributing positively to school. Examples may include- Prefect work, student council, college awareness week committee, and Well-being week.

## **2.7 Guidance Delivery**

The Guidance Curriculum is delivered using two types of intervention. These are:

- Formal
- Informal

The Formal Guidance Curriculum is delivered through weekly classes to TY, 5<sup>th</sup> Year, 6<sup>th</sup> Year and LCA students. Currently Classroom Guidance is the course as the main resource for delivering Career Guidance lessons used in OLM. Formal Guidance also involves personal counselling and educational or career-based counselling when needed.

The Informal Guidance Curriculum consists of liaising with other teaching staff, management, Care Team, class tutors and Year Heads and all other relevant non-teaching staff to encourage cross-curricular links and promote the development of a whole school approach regarding the Guidance Plan. Meeting with parents/guardians also form an essential part of informal guidance.

Another function of the Guidance Service is to liaise with Additional Educational Needs (SEN) personnel to provide access to appropriate guidance for students with Additional Educational

Needs. The AEN Team make RACE applications for students. The Guidance Counselling Team assists the AEN Department in preparing the Educational Impact Statement for all students applying for the CAO-administered DARE scheme; the relationship with AEN personnel is critical when completing these applications.

The provision of Guidance Counselling in OLM is based on a Whole School Guidance approach and follows the continuum of support model presented above to ensure the emotional, behavioural, social, learning, and vocational needs of all students are met.

### Section 3: Guidance as part of DEIS

Schools that participate in the DEIS are required to implement a range of planning, target-setting and on-going review processes in the following priority areas:

- Retention and Attendance
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Examination Attainment and Educational Transition
- Partnership with parents and Partnership with others.

The Guidance Team is a member of the DEIS Core Team in OLM. There are several initiatives currently in place in OLM to assist students, particularly in the area of retention and attendance, examination attainment and educational transition. These include the following:

- Trinity Access Programme
- H.E.A.R (Higher Education Access Route)
- D.A.R.E (Disability Access Route to Education)
- The Junior Achievement Programme
- Study Skills Seminars
- The B2C (Bridge to College) programme
- The Leaving Certificate Applied
- ClcikIn programmes
- Jigsaw – One Good School Programme
- School Completion Programme

Firstly, the **Trinity Access Programme** provides a continuum of support to our students, enabling them to identify and fulfil their educational targets. They help to create a supportive culture for education in families and communities affected by disadvantage. Under the three pillars of the TAP – mentoring, pathways to college, leadership in learning – the following initiatives are offered to encourage education attainment and progression in OLM:

- CAW, College Awareness Week – Every year in November, alongside a careers fair, students have access to talks from guest speakers from industry, colleges of further education and universities; they have an opportunity to ask questions and talk to their colleges of interest. Mock interviews and CV clinics are also organised during college awareness week.



- Mentoring – Mentoring happens throughout the year; TY Students complete a Peer Mentoring Programme with Jigsaw which they deliver to 1<sup>st</sup> Year Classes. 3<sup>rd</sup> Year students receive mentoring from outside volunteers under the umbrella of ClklIn 4 times a year; they also participate in mentoring activities as part of the TA21 programme. TY and LCA students are mentored by staff members as part of the Check and Connect programme for Work Experience. Community Mentoring Programme occurs with TY students. If possible, 2 past pupils deliver a mentoring programme with TY students 3 times a year to help them in gaining knowledge and information regarding life after OLM. Scholars Ireland is a programme designed to give twelve 2<sup>nd</sup> Year students an authentic experience of university, from being taught by PhD tutors, to studying undergraduate-style topics. 20 TY students received TA21 training on how to become a mentor. These students discuss, plan and create lessons with their guidance teacher to deliver to 1<sup>st</sup> years. The lessons are centred around the needs of the year group.
- Pathways to Law Programme- 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students take part in activities in TCD designed to give students and families an insight to the study of law and exposure to careers as solicitors/barristers. 1 student and 1 reserve from our school. This programme is being reviewed and updated this year.
- Shadowing Programme- 5<sup>th</sup> year shadow an undergraduate student in TCD for a day. 5 places for our school.
- TCD Open Day- Hear and FCYA information sessions are run as part of TCD Open Day. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years from our school. No cap on numbers.
- Higher Level Maths Tuition Programme- 10-week programme in TCD. Students who are completing the Higher-Level Maths can sign up for the programme.
- HEAR/DARE Application Clinic- Application clinic in National College of Ireland to give information and provide assistance to HEAR/DARE applicants/families.
- Med Day- 6 Junior Certificate students come to TCD for clinical workshops with undergraduates.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Year Start Up – This event welcomes back students who attended the TCD summer school; opportunities are explored to work together throughout the school year.
- English Lecture Series – Lectures delivered on campus by English lecturers which cover most of the LC English syllabus.

- HPAT evening – Run by medicine students who studied for and were successful at the HPAT exam, this event helps students familiarise with the sections of the exam, the skills applicants need to refresh and the timings for the exam.
- Leadership Project – TY students are selected to work on a project based on sustainability. The Project is then showcased and presented in Trinity College at the end of the school year.
- CodePlus Programme – It offers girls an opportunity to learn coding, make animations and design games, write a computer programme, talk to women working in tech companies and much more.
- Cillian Fahy 2 Day Higher LC Maths Revision Programme. 5 students from our school.
- Educational Achievement Awards- Academic achievement projects for 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> years are recognised at an awards ceremony in TCD. 6 awards given to students from our school.
- Junior Cycle Parents Information Evening- Informal information evening. Covers ways in which parents can support children to third level.
- Take 5- A 5-day summer camp. Students spend one day each in TCD, UCD, NUI Maynooth, DIT and DCU. 1 student and 1 reserve from our school.
- TCD Summer School- A week in Trinity in June to get a taste of college life. 5<sup>th</sup> year students. Quota for this school to be confirmed.
- Taste of TAP – A one-day event that gives students an introduction to the Trinity Access Young Adult Foundation Course. Open to 4 students who are HEAR eligible. In relation to further education, students may apply to complete TAP Foundation Course, which is an academic and personal preparation for students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to undertake degree-course studies for socio-economic reasons. The course aims to:
  - Increase students' vocabulary and knowledge to the level expected of an undergraduate student
  - Equip students with the skills that they will need in order to benefit from and participate in a third level course
  - Build up students' confidence in their academic abilities
  - Assist students to find a 3<sup>rd</sup> level course that best suits their abilities and interests

- Prepare students to compete equally for entry to 3<sup>rd</sup> level.
- **Jump A Grade** – The programme provides grinds for 5th and 6th year students, plus Maths for Higher Level 3rd years.
- **H.E.A.R (Higher Education Access Route)** is an admissions route for school leavers from socio-economic groups that are under-represented at third level education. It was established by 16 colleges and universities to ensure that all LC students have a fair and equal opportunity to progress to third level education. Reduced points CAO are offered in the participating colleges only if students' applications meet the minimum entry requirements. Students are offered post-entry supports such as financial, academic, social and personal.
- **The Junior Achievement Programme** helps to bring a connection to students from our school with business or to provide a role model to inspire them to succeed in life. This programme uses hands-on experience to help young people understand the economics of life. In partnership with business and educators, Junior Achievement brings the real world to students, opening their minds to their potential. The following 6-week programmes take place in OLM:
  - **Economics of Staying in School**- Choices have trade-offs. Choices have consequences. Students are taught how to make informed choices about their future education, careers, budgets, and other personal economic decisions. The Economic of Staying in School explains the economic benefits of an education. 3<sup>rd</sup> year class groups benefit from this programme.
  - **Success Skills**- Building rapport. Influencing others. Teamwork. These are critical interpersonal skills. Students undergo individual interpersonal skills assessment, and benchmarks are set. They then practice and develop these skills as JA classroom volunteers demonstrate their relevance to school, to work, and to life. JA Success skills programme develops students' interpersonal effectiveness and problem-solving strategies necessary for the workplace. 5<sup>th</sup> year LCE and LCA students benefit from this programme.

- Bank Your Future - Managing your money, understanding credit, balancing your budget and the costs/benefits of insurance. Bank Your Future explains the importance of acquiring these critical skills. Students identify their skills and interests, learn how to use credit wisely and how to become 'smart' shoppers! Students learn that staying in education provides better career choices and increases future earnings. Includes a third level visit to UCD. 5<sup>th</sup> year LCE and LCA students benefit from this programme.
- Company Programme - With the support and guidance of business volunteers from the local business community. The JA Company Programme provides basic economic education for secondary students. By organising and operating an actual business enterprise, students not only learn how businesses function, they also learn about the structure of Ireland's market economy and the benefits it provides. JA Company Programme helps young people appreciate and better understand the role of business in our society. 5<sup>th</sup> year LCA students benefit from this programme.
- **Study Skills Seminar** – It is organised for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> (JCSP Funding), 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students (TA21 Funding) in order for them to develop the skills necessary so that they can strive to reach their full potential in the state exams. The Seminar focuses on developing and improving students motivational, organisational and study skills. 1<sup>st</sup> Year study skills are delivered by the Guidance team.
- **The B2C (Bridge to College) Programme** offers young people from designated disadvantaged second-level schools an innovative third level learning experience using technology. The students are divided into teams. One of the first projects that the teams are set is to make a short video introducing their team to the rest of the group. It encourages students to develop their interpersonal skills in a fun environment. It is linked to the Trinity Access Programme. Students who benefit from this course are selected from 4<sup>th</sup> year.
- **Workshop/Visit** - Visits are organised with TU Dublin, Tallaght campus. Students are

provided with the opportunity of finding out about the Electronic Engineering course and other courses on offer in I.T. Tallaght.

- **The Leaving Certificate Applied** is a practical two-year programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. It is designed specifically for students who would significantly struggle to complete the LCE. The guidance module is designed to facilitate the student's vocational development. The students are helped to develop an awareness of their interests, aptitudes, and skills with regard to work; to investigate a range of career, education and training opportunities and to devise a personal career plan. Refer to LCA SUBJECT PLAN for more information.
- **ClikIn programmes** – The ClikIn programmes aim to motivate students be their best selves, encourage them to complete their Leaving Certificate and go onto third level education, focus on career prospects, change negative expectations. All the programmes assist in providing meaningful work experience, job application and interview skills, motivation, and direction. The programmes work with the business community and charity support groups; some of the programmes are *Skills @ work, Skills 2 succeed, mock interviews, career talks in schools, work experience, site visits and career information, career café*.
- **Jigsaw's One Good School™ programme** - This is an initiative which supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people by developing a shared responsibility across the whole school community. Some of the initiatives and events include: Wellbeing Days, Peer Education Programme, Mental Health Workshops, Innovate for Wellbeing, Managing Exam Stress, etc.
- **School Completion Programme** – As part of OLM's DEIS status, the school is part of the SCP which falls under the remit of TESS (Tusla Educational Support Services). A coordinator manages and leads the programme, which identifies students at risk of early school leaving and puts support interventions in place to prevent school leaving. SCP offers support during school, after school, out of school and during holiday time.

The Guidance Department regularly reviews such programmes on offer, and regularly looks at new initiatives available, as it is committed to improving its whole school approach

continuously.

## **Section 4: The Guidance Counselling Department in OLM and current Guidance Procedures**

### **4.1: The Guidance Team in OLM**

Currently OLM's Guidance Team includes:

- Nuala Brady
- Roberta Danzi
- Alex Murray
- Katie Maloney

Ms. Brady and Ms. Danzi are members of the IGC (Institute of Guidance Counsellors) and meet regularly with guidance colleagues during supervision (for an overview of CPD, please see Appendix 5). Ms. Brady was professionally trained in 'School Guidance and Counselling' in NUI Maynooth and holds a master's degree in Guidance and Counselling; she is also registered with the Psychological Society of Ireland. Ms. Danzi holds a master's degree in Guidance Counselling and is a qualified life, business, and career coach. Both Ms. Brady and Ms. Danzi are qualified to administer and store psychometric tests ethically.

Ms. Murray intends to complete the Guidance and Counselling course soon. Ms. Moloney has a keen interest in whole school guidance.

#### **4.1.1 Guidance Team members' duties**

Ms. Alex Murray oversees and administers guidance classes for Junior Cycle through the LifeSkills Programme and SPHE Classes alongside Shannon Burke and Elizabeth Irwin. She also leads career guidance classes to one group of 6<sup>th</sup> Year LCE students, to 5<sup>th</sup> Year students and to Transition Year students. She is a cooperative teacher with Ms. Danzi for 6<sup>th</sup> Year LCE and LCA students. Ms. Murray oversees a number of programmes available in the school (for details on current programmes, see Section 3).

Ms. Danzi manages one-to-one meetings with students for personal/social, educational and career counselling; she manages some other programmes available to students in OLM and administers psychometric tests as well as delivery of results to students. Ms. Danzi and Ms. Brady are part of the Student Support Team (CARE team) and both attend the weekly meetings. Ms. Katie Moloney oversees all guidance activities for LCA.

Ms. Brady oversees and manages the Guidance Department.

The whole department contributes to the organisation of College Awareness Week and the smooth running of the Guidance Service in OLM.

The Guidance Team has the responsibility to deliver the Guidance Programme, but a whole school approach is essential to realise this objective. A holistic approach to Guidance is required to ensure that all students have *access to appropriate guidance* (Education Act, 1998; section C). Guidance planning in OLM is to be considered a process which evolves over time, reflecting the needs of all students, available resources, and relative factors. Please refer to 5.1.1 (Personnel/Guidance Partners) for a list of staff that supports the planning, development, and delivery of the Guidance Programme.

## **4.2 Timetabling of Guidance Counselling**

Number of hours allocated to guidance: 27hours 40mins

Timetabled Career Guidance Classes:

- 1 hour class period rotation for the two TY Groups. Alex Murray
- 1hour class period (for the 5<sup>th</sup> Year Group). Alex Murray
- 1hour class period (for each of the LCA groups, LCA 1 and LCA 2). Co-operative teaching, Alex Murray and Roberta Danzi
- 1hour class period (for the 6<sup>th</sup> Year Group) Co-operative teaching, Alex Murray and Roberta Danzi
- 40-minute TA21 Meeting (weekly basis). Alex Murray, Nuala Brady, Martha Donovan, Claire Flanagan, Christine Cahill and Roberta Danzi
- 2 by 40-minute Care Team Meetings (weekly basis). Nuala Brady and Roberta Danzi
- 1 hour AEN and JCSP Meeting (weekly basis). Nuala Brady
- Guidance Time: Roberta Danzi, 10 hours; Alex Murray, 3 hours.

## **4.3 Current Guidance Procedures**

### **4.3.1 Counselling**

The Counselling Service in the school is based on empowering students to make effective decisions, solve problems, address behaviours, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing. These types of situations may be resolved using:

- Personal/Social Counselling
- Educational Counselling



- Career Counselling

Counselling is a key element of the school guidance programme and each student is entitled to 'adequate guidance', under the Education Act 1998. Counselling can only take place if the student is willing to participate and after an initial referral, it is always the student's choice whether they wish to continue. At all times it is the policy of the Guidance Service to respect and value a student who is receiving counselling and to provide the student with a safe, accepting atmosphere where they feel listened to and understood.

#### *4.3.1.1 Referrals & Student Appointment procedures*

If a teacher feels that a particular student from their class is in need of counselling, they refer the student in question to the Guidance Team. There are two types of referral processes:

- Referrals made to the Guidance Counsellors:** A referral form is filled in which highlights whether the student is receiving personal/educational or vocational support from the GC. These are referrals made by those who feel some intervention is needed by the Guidance Team. It is vital to remember that voluntary participation in counselling of the referred student must be respected by all concerned.
- Referrals made by the Guidance Counsellors:** Families will receive a letter of referral, stating that they recommend that the student get external emotional support from outside agencies. If the Guidance Counsellors feel that an individual student needs extra support outside of school by other qualified agencies, the school, through the Principal/Care Team/HSCL, will facilitate/advise on access to the provision of such assistance following the agreed procedures with the school, parents and local agencies.

Students can also be referred to a former guidance counsellor on a fortnightly basis. Six students can be referred to the services of an external agency, Let's get talking, funded by the SCP.

All appointments with the Guidance Counsellors happen during timetabled classes; this is the agreed procedure with the co-operation of the Principal and the subject teachers.

#### *4.3.1.2 Personal Counselling Appointments*

Personal Counselling Appointments with the Guidance Counsellors can be for a variety of reasons:

- A member of staff may be concerned about a student and refer the student directly to the Guidance Counsellors
- A student may be referred through the Ladder of Referral for Students (see Appendix 3: Ladder of Referral for Students (Pastoral Concerns))
- A parent/guardian may be concerned about their son/daughter or may need some intervention by the Guidance Counsellors
- A student may want to self-refer
- Students may refer another student to the Guidance Service

There are many possible reasons as to why a student may need counselling, these may include:

|                |                 |                   |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Coping skills  | Bullying Issues | Depression        |
| Family matters | Self-harm       | Suicidal thoughts |
| Self-esteem    | Stress          | Anxiety           |

Personal counselling appointments with the Guidance Counsellors are arranged as soon as possible following referral or request for appointment.

#### *4.3.1.3 Education / Career Guidance Appointments*

Educational appointments can be made by the students themselves or the Guidance Counsellors can request a student to attend a meeting. Career appointments could typically involve:

- Carrying out or getting feedback on Interest/Aptitude tests and analysing them to see what is suitable for the student regarding their career
- Giving students information regarding college requirements and what subjects/levels/grades/points are required for their chosen career
- CAO/UCAS/EUNICAS information regarding students applying for third level education in Ireland, in the UK or in Europe
- Discussing jobs and what is involved in different professions
- Giving students information regarding grants, scholarships and access programmes and assisting with the application process
- Discussing possible future options after the Leaving Certificate.

#### 4.3.2 Ethical Considerations and Accountability

The Guidance Counselling Service is subject to all relevant legal requirements, to the provision of the 1998 Education Act, to Department of Education and Skills Directives, to the school's mission statement and the school plan. The Guidance Team, like all other members of staff in the school, is entrusted with the care of their students in loco parentis and accepts the responsibilities of this position, always keeping the students' welfare to the forefront. The Guidance Team and those involved in guidance provision are constantly aware of their responsibility to the student, to the school, to their profession, to themselves and to the implementation of this policy. At all times, reporting procedures are in line with the Child Protection Policy; all child protection concerns are immediately referred to the DLP, Mr. Pádhraic Gibbons or, in his absence, the DDLP, Ms. Nuala Brady.

The Guidance Counsellors will refer students to other professionals when ethically or legally required to do so.

At the beginning of the first counselling session, the student is informed of the limits of confidentiality, i.e., what will be discussed will be kept in confidence unless the student is in danger from others or may be in danger to himself/herself or to others. It is also explained to students that there is a legal requirement to refer the student to the necessary people so to best deal with the situation. As the referral system can in some cases take time to be put into place, the Guidance Counsellors will continue to offer the student on-going support while the student is awaiting specialist help. Once the student becomes engaged in the outside support services, the Guidance Counsellors will continue to meet with the student and offer support them where necessary but will not engage in counselling sessions if the student is attending session offered by outside agencies. When the student has completed their sessions with the outside agency, they may then opt to resume/begin on-going counselling/support with the Guidance Counsellors, if it is deemed necessary.

#### 4.3.3 Referral to external agencies

There are several partners, agencies, and professionals where OLM can seek additional support. When outside of the remit of the Guidance Counselling Team, students are referred to other professionals. A meeting is held with parents/guardians of the student, and they are provided with a letter of referral to gain extra supports. Parents are also given a list of agencies that they can apply to gain extra support for their child.

In cases of exceptional circumstances such as physical/sexual/neglect abuse by a member of the family TUSLA guidelines are followed. The procedure followed when a referral is made to an outside agency is:

- The DLP/DDLP contacts the parent/guardian to inform them of the situation
- The DLP/DDLP may inform the parent/guardian that a child protection form has or will be sent to the principal social worker depending on the nature of the matter
- Parents may be advised to bring their son/daughter to their family doctor immediately if there is a concern that the child is a danger to themselves or other.

OLM partners with Joan O'Halloran, who is a former Guidance Counsellor of OLM. Parental consent is required for students to partake in this counselling service. 6 other students receive 8 counselling sessions from Let's Get Talking as part of a support intervention from SCP. Other agencies that support OLM include Jigsaw, the Oasis Centre, Samaritans, and Pieta House.

#### **4.4 Confidentiality**

It is vital that the relationship between the student and the Guidance Counsellors is built on trust and on a professional basis. The Guidance Counsellors will take all reasonable measures to ensure that consultations with students take place in an appropriate and private environment. The Guidance Counsellors take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about students. The Guidance Counsellors should inform the student about the limits of confidentiality. The student should be assured of the Guidance Counsellors' professional discretion in dealing with their personal issues. Disclosure of information to an appropriate third party may be made where it is deemed necessary, for example:

- To protect the interest of the student
- Where the student is in danger
- To safeguard the welfare of another student
- Where the student is a danger to another student
- Where the Guidance Counsellors are required to act by law
- For the purpose of professional consultation or supervision

This list is not exhaustive and other issues may arise that are not listed here. The Guidance Counsellors discuss information about students only for professional purposes and only with those who are clearly entitled to be consulted. Information is managed in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. Disclosure is only made to those who the Guidance

Counsellors believe should know or by law are entitled to know.

#### **4.5 Supervision**

The Guidance Counsellors are aware of the need to keep up to date in their role. To do this, each member of the team attend regular in-service and is committed to regular supervision and training. Regular attendance at Counselling Supervision is facilitated by the school through sensitive timetabling on Tuesday afternoons. The IGC conference provides a range of in-service through the provision of workshops and presentations relevant to the work of the Guidance Counsellors. Additional in-service is organised at local and/or national level and is open to all registered current members of the IGC. Attendance at open days, career seminars, etc. all constitute in-career development. The Department of Education and Skills recognises the importance of professional supervision for Guidance Counsellors. Funding is provided to support professional counselling supervision since 2005 within the branches of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. A minimum of five sessions per year are attended by Guidance Counsellors.

#### **4.6 Protocol for meeting with students**

Where a student referred by another member of staff, the Guidance Counsellors will seek out the student and offer them an available time slot. Students may request an appointment for either counselling or careers. This can be done verbally, through Teams or through the Year Head / class teacher / subject teacher. Parents/guardians may also request that the Guidance Counsellor meet with their son/daughter in relation to either counselling or careers. Students may also refer their friends/siblings where they have concerns.

#### **4.7 Protocol for meeting with parents**

Parents/guardians can contact the Guidance Counsellors through the main office. The Guidance Counsellors are available at parent-teacher meetings throughout the year. Where the Guidance Counsellors need to contact a parent/guardian, permission of the student is usually sought beforehand if this contact is regarding any issue discussed during a guidance counselling appointment.

#### **4.8 Students changing subject / level**

Occasionally, a student may decide to change subjects or subject level during the school year. Such a change is a serious decision, not to be taken lightly. Before any change is made, the

following procedures apply:

- The student must first discuss any change of subject with the relevant subject teachers, who will advise them in this regard
- The student will discuss this with the Guidance Counsellors, who will advise them on the implications of a change of subject/subject level for third level courses and careers
- The parent/guardian may wish to meet with the Guidance Counsellors to discuss this further.
- A change of subject/level form must be filled in.

## **4.9 Subject choice procedures**

Subject choice takes place when students are in 6<sup>th</sup> Class and when students are in TY.

### **4.9.1 Incoming First Year**

When prospective students apply for enrolment, they are assessed in February (of the academic year prior to the student starting in OLM), they are assigned to a mixed ability class group which has a timetable allocated with core and choice subjects. As part of their application process, they make their subject choices. An information session on this is provided to both students and their parents about the benefits of selecting certain subjects. Students gain a taster of these subjects during our Open Day. Students can consult the Guidance Counsellors for information on subjects and their decisions/choice.

Taster days are organised for students transitioning from Junior Cycle to TY and from TY to Senior Cycle to help them decide between the LCE and LCA course of study.

### **4.9.2 Fifth Year**

Students opting for the Leaving Certificate Established select their subject choice in order of preference during February of the academic year before starting Fifth Year. A provisional timetable is drawn up based on the preferential choices of the students. OLM endeavours to offer the students their subject choice in so far as it is reasonably possible to do so. The Guidance Counsellors present information to all students on the subjects available. Students are encouraged to discuss all choices with their parents before making their final decision. An information session is provided to both students and parents about subject options. Students complete CAT4 Testing as it will help them to determine their own areas of strength and possible subject choices. Students can consult the Guidance Counsellors for information on subjects and their decision/choice, the impact of choosing/not choosing subjects on further/higher

education can also be discussed.

#### **4.10 Programme choice procedures**

1. Firstly, all students from TY will complete Cognitive Abilities Test 4 psychometric test to measure three principal forms of reasoning - verbal, non-verbal and numerical as well as an element of spatial ability. The data from CAT4 will be used to identify individual pupil potential and learning styles and enhance all aspects of teaching and learning process, from organising classes to predicting future educational attainment. Also, the data collected will pinpoint students who met the criteria for partaking in the LCA programme.
2. Parents and students receive information sessions on both programmes. Students are given application forms for LCA with related information in addition to a survey to complete on subject options for LCE.
3. Then, the GC with students from 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Year LCE and LCA visit all Transition Year class groups to discuss these programmes. Students from 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Year give their personal experience of each subject they are studying in their chosen programme. A Question-and-Answer Session follows.
4. All students from TY Year are given a deadline date for returning forms (two weeks from date of information sessions).
5. The LCA Coordinator requests that staff recommend students who they believe might be suitable candidates to partake in LCA programme. A deadline date is given for completion of this form (two weeks from date of issue).
6. Next, the LCA Coordinator organises a meeting with the Career Guidance teacher, Year Head and TY tutors. At this meeting students' behaviour, attendance, CAT4 results, ability, exam reports are discussed and evaluated. This committee, named above, will collaboratively decide who from the recommended list of students are being considered to partake in this process. Students must complete forms by a specific date.
7. The TY Year-head, Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor will arrange meetings with parents of students who haven't applied to partake in the programme but definitely meet the criteria for LCA.
8. All applicants are interviewed by the LCA co-ordinator and TY team. Principal and

Deputy Principal decide students who will be offered a place on the programme.

9. Each applicant will receive an acceptance or a refusal letter regarding a place being offered on the programme.

10. In September an information morning is organised to parents and students starting LCA, where the course is outlined to them in detail.

11. At the beginning of each year, subject teachers are given a class list and it is orally explained which students have learning difficulties or any issues. An asterisk is placed beside a student's name who has been diagnosed or has any other concerns.

#### **4.11 A tracking system of Past Pupils**

Once students receive their Leaving Certificate results, they are asked to inform the Guidance Counsellors of their career choice; the Guidance Team may ask for permission to contact them in order to find out what career choice they made in regard to:

- Third Level education
- Further Education
- Going directly into employment
- Taking a 'gap' year

Sixth Year students are asked to provide the Guidance Counsellors with contact details whereby they can be contacted by the school in September/October regarding their final choice of course or career. Where possible, students are tracked after one year to provide richer data. The Guidance Team will collate this information and it is made available to the Board of Management, the staff, student, and parents on request. Former students and their parents/guardians are asked for consent for the data to be shared anonymously with Trinity College, as part of the Trinity Access Programme and for research purposes.

#### **4.12 Guest speakers**

Several guest speakers from various associations and Third Level colleges are invited by the Guidance Team to speak to students about their courses and organisations. These talks generally take place during OLM's College Awareness Week and may also be organised during guidance classes throughout the year, in consultation with the students and school management. When these take place, one Guidance Counsellor or another teacher is present. Feedback is sought from the students to assess the benefit of the talk.

#### **4.13 College Open Days**



As part of the careers programme, students are encouraged to attend college Open Days that are organised by Third Level institutions. OLM views Open Days as a good way to meet and speak with lecturers and current students, discuss courses and find out about college life. The Guidance Team organises for students to attend one Open Day during 5<sup>th</sup> Year and two Open Days during 6<sup>th</sup> Year. Sixth Year students are also given the opportunity to attend careers exhibitions, such as WorldSkills Ireland and Higher Options. Should the programme accommodate it, Transition Year students are offered the opportunity to attend a campus tour. The entire school community attended WorldSkills Ireland this year.

#### **4.14 Students transferring into OLM**

All transfers must be in line with the Admission Policy. Students and their parents/guardians transferring to OLM are met by the Principal and/or Deputy Principal. Students must complete the CAT4 testing and choose subjects that are available from the option lines. Parents/Guardians and the school from which the student is transferring must provide OLM with all necessary documentation.

#### **4.15 Early School leavers**

Attendance of all junior students in OLM is monitored by all staff involved and discussed at the CARE team (of which the Guidance Counsellors are members) meetings. Students at risk of leaving school early are monitored and referred to the School Completion Officer, who will make an appointment with the student and parents/guardians to ensure the right support is put in place.

When a student is out of school for any reason a note must be given to the class teachers using the school journal when he/she returns. These notes should be signed by a parent or guardian and should state why the student was absent. If a student is absent for more than three days, please contact the school by letter or telephone. It is recommended that Wednesday afternoon, which is free, should be used for appointments with dentists, doctors etc. Time should not be taken out of class where possible. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please inform us using the journal. When a child is absent from school and no message or medical cert has been received from home the school will make contact in the following manner:

- Daily text from attendance officer.
- Phone call after 3 days unexplained absence by your child's Class Teacher.
- Phone call after 5 days unexplained absence by your child's Year Head.

- Contact from the HSCL and the School Completion Programme Coordinator.
- 10-day letter from school generated automatically after 10 unexplained absences.
- 15-day letter from school generated automatically after 15 unexplained absences.
- 20-day letter from school generated automatically after 20 unexplained absences.

Please note that all schools are expected to complete a referral to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) when a student has reached the threshold of 20 unexplained absences or where those absences may have uncertainty as to the reasons given. This is a legal requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

#### **4.16 Forms of testing for students**

Assessment tests for incoming First Year students come under the remit of the Learning Support (SEN) department with support from the Guidance Service. All tests are used in compliance with Circular 0034/15 – Assessment Instruments approved for use for guidance and/or learning support in post-primary schools (for link to the circular, please see *Appendix 1*).

## **Section 5: Resources and Facilities available to the Guidance Service**

There are various resources including personnel (guidance partners), facilities, materials, external resources and time allocation needed for the performance of the Guidance Activities and the management of the School Guidance Programme.

### **5.1 Facilities available to the Guidance Service**

- Personnel / Guidance Partners
- Facilities
- Materials and Resources
- External resources
- Time Allocation

#### **5.1.1 Personnel / Guidance Partners**

The Guidance Programme is an integral part of the school curriculum and, as such, involves the whole school community. The guidance counsellor in OLM Drimnagh seeks to work collaboratively and this work is underpinned by a mutual respect. The school community builds on a shared vision for our students under our school's motto '*Shaping a Brighter Future for Our Young People*'. This is a continuous process which is regularly evaluated with a view to updating and enhancing the programme. The Guidance Service consults and liaises with the following key personnel in the planning and development of the programme:

|                                               |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Principal and Deputy Principal                | Wellbeing / SPHE personnel |
| Board of Management                           | Pastoral Care Team         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> Year Heads | Programme Planning Team    |
| Class Teachers                                | Programmes coordinator     |
| Subject Teachers                              | DEIS Team                  |
| Home School Community Liaison Officer         | AEN coordinator            |
| School Completion Programme Coordinator       | External partners          |
| Additional Needs Assistants                   | Secretaries                |

The AEN (Additional Educational Needs) department within the school is a vital resource and consultation between the Guidance Counsellors and teachers involved in AEN is continuous throughout the year. This relationship becomes very important around the time of DARE

applications.

### 5.1.2 Facilities

One Guidance Office, fully equipped with computer and Internet connection, printer, information booklets, leaflets and college prospectuses. A comfortable area for personal counselling is made available to students and the school mobile phone is accessible to the service. A GDPR compliant filing system is in place to keep confidential record of meetings. Confidential guidance files on each student are kept under lock and key in the guidance room.

### 5.1.3 Materials and Resources

A careers library is made available, with one or more copies of all Irish college prospectuses, one copy of many UK college prospectuses, college of further education booklets. Students can avail of HEAR, DARE and other Access Information booklets and application forms, as well as booklets and leaflets on apprenticeship programmes, and all career literature relevant to the students. The students can access the Internet through the school's Chrome Books or in the Computer Room, upon booking of the services.

The Guidance Service draws all relevant and updated information from the main websites, including:

- [Careersportal.ie](https://careersportal.ie)
- [Qualifax.ie](https://qualifax.ie)
- [Apprenticeships.ie](https://apprenticeships.ie)
- [Careernews.ie](https://careernews.ie)
- [Ucas.com](https://ucas.com)
- [Eunicas.ie](https://eunicas.ie)
- [Examinations.ie](https://examinations.ie)
- Individual higher education institute websites

A Career Guidance Noticeboard is available to share updates and events with students. This is located along the corridor on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Updates are also shared on Teams, which is regularly used by the Guidance Team and by students to communicate events, initiatives and set appointments for 1-to-1 meetings.

OLM Drimnagh is a secondary school where Transition Year is compulsory. In addition, it is a school that offers Leaving Cert Applied. This whole school guidance plan recognises the significant contribution that Leaving Certificate Applied and Transition Year programmes make

in providing students with Guidance-related activities. Furthermore, the Guidance Department acknowledges the importance of SPHE, and religious education which is compulsory, to the social and personal development focus of Guidance and Counselling.

#### 5.1.4 External Resources

OLM Drimnagh works closely with numerous outside organisations and groups such as **Trinity Access / TA21, Junior Achievement Ireland, Communicorp, KlikIn, Law Society of Ireland, Jigsaw** and **Dublin South City Partnership** to name a few. Through such partnerships, OLM Drimnagh provides an enhanced Whole School Guidance programme, as reflected in this plan, and is available for all our students.

Students are given the opportunity to attend college Open Days in Senior Cycle, as well as events such as WorldSkills Ireland, Higher Options, etc. Students are given information and encouraged to attend as many colleges' open days as possible. University, College, TAP representatives are available to give talks to students on request. Guest Speakers include Irish Rail, Students Enrichment Services for study skills, speakers from universities and colleges of further education, professionals from trade and industry. JAP (Junior Achievement Programme) is an excellent resource to create awareness and motivation in students regarding their future careers. National resources include DES agencies such as PDST (Professional Development Services for Teachers), the newly established National Policy Group for Lifelong Guidance, the former NCGE (National Centre for Guidance in Education), NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) and the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC).

#### 5.1.5 Time Allocation

In OLM, Career Guidance is timetabled using the Department of Education's Guidance allocation and some general allocation. The Guidance Team's weekly timetable includes two hours' LCA Career Guidance (LCA 1 and LCA 2), one-hour LCE 6<sup>th</sup> Year Career Guidance, one hour 5<sup>th</sup> Year Career Guidance and one hour TY Career Guidance. For Junior Cycle, Career Guidance classes are delivered in modules using NCGE resources in either RE, SPHE or Lifeskills (1<sup>st</sup> Year only) lessons. All class groups are of a mixed ability level and all the students are receiving the same guidance information.

## **Section 6: Student Support**

### **6.1 Pastoral Care Team**

#### **6.1.1. Rationale behind the Pastoral Care Team**

- To work in collaboration with each other to pool resources in managing and supporting the care needs of students within the school for the wellbeing of students
- To establish an effective line of communication around complex issues that responds sensitively to the needs of staff, students and parents
- To best utilise time spent in meetings with each other (formal and informal) and reduce the chances of duplicating care resources
- To maximise the pro-active approach to care within the school and provide collegial support in dealing with complex health and welfare issues.

#### **6.1.2 The role of the Pastoral Care structures**

The Pastoral Care structures support the care needs of students in line with the Pastoral Care Policy. Any member of staff who has concerns about a student and feels that the situation needs to be addressed can refer the student to a member of the Pastoral Care Team. The Pastoral Care Team takes referrals around individual and general issues of concern relevant to student care and wellbeing. When individual issues of concern arise within, or are referred to, the Pastoral Care Team, referrals will be made to the relevant personnel within the Pastoral Ladder of Referral. Staff are constantly reminded that Child Protection concerns should be reported to the DLP/DDLP, as per the OLM's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

### **6.2 Year Heads**

Year Heads are responsible for monitoring the welfare, achievement and behaviour of all students in their year group and working with teachers, students, parents and other support services to manage student progress. Each year group has a specific Year Head and each class group has a class teacher. Parents/guardians can make an appointment to speak with the Year Head if they have concerns about their child's academic or personal development. Year Heads may refer students to the Guidance Counsellors for personal, educational and career/vocational counselling and may also, in certain cases, invite the Guidance Counsellors to attend meetings with parents.

### **6.3 Class Teachers**

A class teacher is a teacher who checks that students are in full uniform and have their diary. The class teacher also checks on how student manage their homework diaries and repots any concerns to the Year Head. Depending on the nature of concern, the student may also be referred to the Guidance Counsellors, Pastoral Care Team, HSCL and/or SEN.

#### **6.4 Home School Community Liaison**

This scheme is based on a partnership between the schools, the home and community, all working together in the best interest of the students and their families. It is central to addressing the needs of disadvantaged students and families through acknowledging and developing the role of parents as primary educators.

The HSCL coordinator works with parents/guardians in the following ways:

- Visiting parents/guardians in their homes
- Encouraging parents/guardians into the school to attend courses, talks, meetings
- Actively involving parents/guardians in their child's education
- Involving parents/guardians in school policy discussion
- Encouraging parents/guardians to become involved in the local education committee.

The HSCL coordinator works with management an staff in OLM by liaising with them regarding particular students and their families and by encouraging closer ties between teachers and parents. HSCL continues to work in an integrated way with all support structures in the school including the Guidance Counsellors, SCP and Pastoral Care Team.

#### **6.5 Student Voice**

In OLM, leadership development is prioritised for our young people; for this reason, the school nominates and elects students annually to support our younger students. Students are encouraged to volunteer to become part of the Green Schools' Committee (all Year Groups), the Student Council (all Year Groups), the Sports Council (TY and 5<sup>th</sup> Year), Prefects (TY and 5<sup>th</sup> Year) and Peer Mentors (TY).

**The Student Council** is elected each year from students in each year group. It sets targets for what it wants to achieve in school improvement and is a vital link between the teachers, Principal and Deputy Principal of OLM as well as the Board of Management. As this document is drafted, the Student Council is in the process of being set up.

**Peer Mentors** deliver a Jigsaw Peer Education programme. This is a programme where senior

students are trained to deliver a 40-minute presentation called 'it's time to start talking' to junior students. The presentation builds awareness of youth mental health, explores what kind of things help and hurt our mental health, and emphasises the importance of seeking help when feeling down, worried or stressed.



## **Section 7: Links with Staff/Outside Agencies**

### **7.1 Links with Principal/Deputy Principal**

The Guidance Team has regular formal/informal meetings with the Principal/Deputy Principal regarding various issues.

### **7.2 Links with Year Heads**

The Guidance Counsellors and Year Heads meet on a regular basis informally and formally as part of the Pastoral Care Team meetings.

### **7.3 Links with Class Teachers**

Contact is made on an informal basis. The Class Teachers contact the Guidance Counsellors as the need arises.

### **7.4 Links with LCA coordinator**

One of the Guidance Counsellors is assigned to teach the guidance module to LCA Year 1 and LCA Year 2 classes. Attention is given to all students, particularly those at risk of dropping out of the course and those experiencing personal difficulties. The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the LCA team. This involves participating in regular LCA meetings and working very closely with the LCA coordinator in relation to many general issues that can arise.

### **7.5 Links with AEN**

All relevant information regarding the additional needs of new and existing students is given to staff at the beginning of the school year. The AEN coordinator visits the feeder primary schools and correlates relevant information related to students with SEN. All this information is kept on file – in compliance with GDPR legislation - and is available to staff on a need-to-know basis. The assessment day for incoming First Year students is organised and run by the Guidance Department and AEN coordinator, following on from this, the class groups are formed on a mixed ability basis. There can be collaboration with the Guidance Counsellors regarding subject choice for students with Additional educational needs. Individual students' needs are discussed and where necessary, appointments made to meet with the Guidance Counsellors to discuss further education/career options. Parents are welcome to meet with the Guidance Team and Learning Support coordinator to explore options for further education. The Guidance Team is mindful of the need to keep up to date on the issues relating to students with Additional educational needs.

## **7.6 Links with HSCL**

Students may be referred directly for guidance and counselling support at the request of the HSCL coordinator or at the request of parents through the HSCL office. The HSCL coordinator and Guidance Team jointly hold a coffee morning and information session for parents on further education, the CAO process and other relevant topics prior to students making their applications.

## **7.7 Links with Teaching Staff**

The Guidance Team aims to foster good relationships with all teaching staff so as to ensure a collaborative approach to Whole School Guidance in OLM.

## **7.8 Links with Past Pupils**

Past Pupils are welcome to contact the Guidance Counsellors to discuss further education. Contact is maintained by appointment and/or telephone/e-mail concerning applying to CAO, UCAS, applying to repeat Leaving Certificate subjects as external students, etc. This contact often takes place after school hours.

## **7.9 Links with parents/guardians**

Appointments are arranged with parents/guardians on request. The Guidance Counsellors attend presentation/informal coffee mornings in conjunction with HSCL to meet parents.

## **7.10 Links with Pastoral Care Team**

The Guidance Team takes part in Pastoral Care Team meetings and takes referral from it.

## **7.11 Links with NEPS**

The Guidance Team, along with the AEN coordinator attends relevant meetings with the NEPS Educational Psychologist concerning students in their care.

## **7.12 Links with Colleges/Admission Offices**

College representatives are invited to the school to speak to Senior Cycle students as appropriate. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and the feedback from them is usually positive. Throughout the year we are in regular contact with Admission Officers and Access Officers as well as individual course leaders and professors. Students are also supported in school through the CAO/PLC college application procedures.

## **7.13 Links with Local Businesses**

OLM has many links with local businesses due to students carrying out work placements in their organisation/shop/businesses. The Wellbeing coordinator partakes in identifying local businesses and support services that might be of relevance to the students' wellbeing, development and progression.

## Section 8: Confidentiality and GDPR

### 8.1 Confidentiality and the Guidance Counsellor

As confidentiality is at the core of the guidance counselling relationship, the Guidance Team takes all reasonable steps to safeguard this client privilege under the terms and conditions laid down in the Institute of Guidance counsellors “*Constitution and Code of Ethics*” 2004 (for link to the document, please see Appendix 1) as follows:

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1. A professional relationship involving confidentiality is at the core of guidance counselling. Guidance Counsellors take all reasonable steps to ensure that consultation with clients takes place in an appropriately private environment.*
- 2. Guidance Counsellors take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about clients obtained in the course of professional work. They reveal such information only with the client’s consent, but with certain exceptions, which include: where concealment would result in danger to the client or others; when required by the Law or designated guidelines; or for purposes of professional consultation or supervision.*
- 3. It is the duty of Guidance Counsellors to inform clients about legal limits of confidentiality.*
- 4. Guidance Counsellors discuss information about clients only for professional purposes, and only with those who are clearly entitled to be consulted. Written and oral reports contain only such data as are pertinent to the case, and every effort is made to avoid undue invasion of the clients’ privacy.*
- 5. Guidance Counsellors publish oral or written information about clients only with their written consent, or where the identity of individuals or groups is adequately disguised.*
- 6. Subject to the law, Guidance Counsellors take all reasonable steps to safeguard the storage, retrieval and disposal of clients’ records, both written and electronic. Where Guidance Counsellors’ control of such records is limited, they exercise discretion over the information recorded.*
- 7. With the exception of recording of public behaviour, Guidance Counsellors make audio, video or photographic records of clients only where these persons have given prior written agreement to the making of the record and the conditions of subsequent access.*
- 8. Guidance Counsellors take all reasonable steps to ensure that colleagues, principals and*

*others with whom they work understand and respect the need for confidentiality.*

The issue of confidentiality is usually discussed with the client/clients at the beginning of the first appointment. The Guidance Counsellors have a lockable filing cabinet in which to store student files. Files on students are usually kept for five years and then destroyed.

The guidance counsellor makes the following confidentiality statement to students: *“What we talk about here will remain confidential. This means that I won’t talk to anyone else about our conversation unless you agree to it. But there are times when I will have to tell or talk to someone else about what you tell me. These times are: if you tell me you are going to hurt or harm yourself; if you tell me you are going to hurt or harm someone else; if you tell me that you yourself or someone you know is being hurt or harmed or abused in any way. I will do this to make sure that you are safe and not in danger. Do you understand? Do you have any questions?”*

Ms. Brady and Ms. Danzi are members of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors Professional Association and thus adhere to its professional code of ethics. The Department of Education and Skills provides a national programme of supervision support for Guidance Counsellors in schools. This is coordinated through the regional governance of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. Guidance Counsellors are encouraged and supported to attend as a means of ensuring best practice. Ongoing attendance and engagement in CPD are viewed and supported as best practice to ensure provision of professional service. Ms. Danzi attends supervision and branch meetings, to share and learn best practice for guidance and counselling.

## Section 9: Whole School Guidance Plan Evaluation and Review

### 9.1 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Whole School Guidance Plan

The WSGP is constantly evolving and its goal is to meet the ever-changing needs of the school population. Therefore, OLM engages in a process of on-going monitoring, evaluation, improvement and planning to ensure learnings from challenges and opportunities, as well as shared best practice, are incorporated into the plan.

The planning of the Whole School Guidance Plan is a whole school activity and is an integral part of the School Development Plan. The Guidance Counsellors' task, as coordinators of the Guidance Services in OLM, is to oversee whether or not guidance objectives are being achieved, identify the factors that facilitate or hinder that achievement, highlight unplanned outcomes, recognise unmet needs and possibly new/emerging target groups. This process assists the school on forward planning so that the WSGP remains relevant to the needs of the students.

Guidance planning, however, draws not only on the experiences of the guidance counsellor in the school but also involves school management, school staff and well as the students and their parents. The review will adopt the '*School Self-Evaluation*' guidelines. The '*School Self-Evaluation Guidelines 2016- 2020, Post-Primary*' states that this is '*a collaborative, inclusive, reflective process [which] the principal, deputy principal and teachers, under the direction of the board of management and the patron and in consultation with parents and students, engage in reflective enquiry on the work of the school*' (Department of Education and Skills, '*School Self-Evaluation Guidelines, 2016-2020, Post-Primary*', (2016), pg. 10).

Central to a School Self-Evaluation is that it is evidence-based and is done for the improvement of students. The guidelines will require the guidance department to ask itself the following questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are our strengths?
- How can we find out more?
- What are our areas for improvement?
- How can we improve?
- What targets can we identify and decide to progress with?

- Do these targets focus on learner outcomes and teaching & learning?
- Can we name the specific actions we are going to undertake for the improvement of the plan?
- Does each action fit in with DEIS?
- How is each action going to impact DEIS?
- Are the actions SMART? Specific/measurable/attainable/realistic/time-bound?
- Who will undertake the actions?
- Who will monitor the actions?
- When will the actions be reviewed and by whom?
- What is the time frame?
- How can parents be included? *(This list of questions is not exhaustive and may be added to as necessary. Department of Education and Skills, 'School Self-Evaluation Guidelines, 2016-2020, Post-Primary', (2016), pg. 10)*

For the Whole School Guidance review, the department will follow the school self- evaluation's six-step process explained below.



The collection of data, for evidence, will be done both quantitatively and qualitatively, for best practice and acted in order to improve students learning and well-being, and to truly live up to OLM's motto 'Shaping a Brighter Future for our Young People'.

## 7.2 Future Planning

Cognisant of the necessity to plan for the future needs of OLM Drimnagh, it is intended that some areas will be identified where improvements can be implemented. A number of areas have been pinpointed for attention. While each area is seen as important, it is also noted that some must be prioritised (For details of areas under review for improvement, please see *Appendix 4*). **Evaluation procedures:** The Guidance Team will distribute questionnaires to students to find out if the service is useful and she will have group discussion with members of the school community to evaluate the end product.



# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX 1 – Policies and publications that inform this Whole School Guidance Plan**

- [Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the implications of Section 9 \(c\) of the Education Act \(1998\)](#)
- [DES Programme Recognition Framework \(2016\)](#)
- [DES Circular 0055/2019: Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle](#)
- [Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines 2021](#)
- [NCGE: A whole school guidance framework 2017](#)
- [DE: Staffing Arrangements Circulars 0022;0023;0024/2022, published April 2022 revised PTR adjustment, now full restoration, Appendix 3 Guidance](#)
- [Department of Education and Skills Circular 0009/2012](#)
- [Guidelines for Second-Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9\(c\) of the Education Act 1998, Relating to Students' Access to Appropriate Guidance \(DES, 2005\)](#)
- [Looking at our School; An aid to self-evaluation in second-level schools](#)
- [Department of Education and Skills, School Self-Evaluation Guidelines, 2016-2020, Post-Primary](#)
- [Circular 0034/15 – Assessment Instruments](#)
- [IGC Constitution and Code of Ethics - 2004](#)

## APPENDIX 2: Current OLM Policies related to School Guidance

| Written Policies: available on request | Policy ratified by BOM in 2022/2023 | Draft Policies for Ratification @ next BOM meeting | Policy exists but is in need of review | Policy group currently in existence | No Policy in place yet |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Acceptable Use Policy                  | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| OLM Admission Policy                   | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Anti-Bullying Policy                   | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Guidelines for Parent-teacher meetings | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Critical Incident Policy               | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Attendance and Punctuality Procedure   | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Additional Education Needs Policy      | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Child Protection Policy and Procedures | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| OLM Distance Learning Policy           | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Code of Behaviour                      | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| RSE                                    | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| SPHE                                   | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Pastoral Care                          | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Protected Disclosures Policy           | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| School statement on the use of drugs   | ✓                                   |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Data Records/Confidentiality           | Adhering to GDPR                    |                                                    |                                        |                                     |                        |
| Intercultural Policy                   |                                     |                                                    |                                        |                                     | ✓                      |

### **APPENDIX 3: Ladder of Referral for Students (Pastoral Concerns)**

Where a staff member is concerned about a student, the sequence below is the recommended action plan. When there is a serious concern that a student's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk, staff members immediately inform the Principal (Designated Liaison Person) or the Deputy Principal (Deputy Designated Liaison Person).

#### **Step 1.**

The Teacher talks to the student at an appropriate time and asks them if everything is fine

The Teacher tries to establish the nature of the problem

For minor problems, listen to the student, reassure them and give them practical advice

Check in with them for a day or two.

#### **Step 2.**

If the teacher considers it to be a more serious problem, he/she listens to the student, takes notes and reassures them

The Teacher allows the student to return to class and lets them know they will be in touch as soon as possible, without promising confidentiality

The Teacher reports to the Year Head and establishes next plan of action.

#### **Step 3.**

The Teacher and Year Head implement the agreed plan of action, after the situation is investigated fully and fairly

Year Head considers if the parents should be involved

The Teacher / Year Head checks in with the student, when appropriate to do so.

#### **Step 4.**

For some issues, the Year Head briefs the Guidance Counsellors, HSCLO, the Deputy Principal or Principal

The Guidance Counsellors, HSCLO, Deputy Principal or Principal make sure that all Child Protection protocols are implemented and establish a clear plan of action

One person is appointed to work with the student and monitor their progress until the issue is resolved.

## APPENDIX 4: Student Supports (Non-academic) in OLM

| Student Supports                                                                                                                                               | Staff involved                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Auxiliary Supports                                                                                                                                             | Caretaker<br>Cleaning Staff<br>School Secretary              |
| DEIS                                                                                                                                                           | Duties carried out by an Assistant Principal                 |
| Additional Education Needs                                                                                                                                     | AEN coordinator<br>SNAs                                      |
| Extra-curricular activities                                                                                                                                    | Duties carried out by teachers and SNAs on a voluntary basis |
| Guidance Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Personal counselling</li> <li>➤ Educational counselling</li> <li>➤ Vocational counselling</li> </ul> | The Guidance Counselling Team                                |
| Home School Community Liaison Service                                                                                                                          | HSCL officer                                                 |
| School Completion Programme                                                                                                                                    | School Completion Programme coordinator                      |
| Information events for Parents & Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Open nights</li> <li>➤ Awards Evening</li> </ul>                           | All Staff                                                    |
| Parents-teacher meetings                                                                                                                                       | All Staff                                                    |
| Pastoral Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Care Team</li> <li>➤ Critical Incident Management Team</li> </ul>                                       | Pastoral Care Team                                           |
| Student Council                                                                                                                                                | Duties carried out by an Assistant Principal                 |

## APPENDIX 5: Continuous Professional Development

The Guidance Team is committed to continuous professional development to be able to provide the best possible service to the student in OLM. These are just a selection of the events the Guidance Counsellors attended over the past three years.

### Record of Continuous Professional Development

| Date                      | Inservice Completed                                                               |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 2023            | Trauma-informed approach to understanding your pupils' story (through IGC branch) |
| December 2022 to May 2023 | Restorative Practice (PDST)                                                       |
| May 2023                  | Best practice and resource sharing (through IGC Branch)                           |
| April 2023                | Info session on harm reduction (addiction) DSCP                                   |
| April 2023                | IGC Conference, Sligo                                                             |
| March 2023                | UCAS application (through the IGC Branch)                                         |
| January 2023              | Dealing with trauma (through the IGC Branch)                                      |
| November 2022             | CAO Autumn Conference                                                             |
| September 2022            | Understanding Social Anxiety. A CBT approach - online                             |
| April 2022                | IGC Conference – online                                                           |
| April 2022                | NCGE Workshop on Whole School Guidance – Dublin                                   |
| March 2022                | NCGE Webinar: Reflecting on guidance provision and needs – online                 |
|                           | NCGE Webinar: Examples of good practice – online                                  |
| February 2022             | NCGE Webinar: transitions pathways and EU opportunities – online                  |
|                           | NCGE Webinar: Students' wellbeing – online                                        |
|                           | NCGE Webinar: The application of law - online                                     |
| November 2021             | CAO Autumn conference – online                                                    |
|                           | NCGE Webinar: National forum on guidance for the green economy - online           |
| September 2021            | NCGE Webinar Settling back and self-care for GCs - online                         |
|                           | Workshop on School staff wellbeing (Shane Martin)                                 |
| August 2021               | Careers portal training (REACH+ programme) - online                               |
| April 2021                | IGC Conference – online                                                           |
| March 2020                | IGC Conference – Galway                                                           |

The Guidance Counsellors engage in ongoing supervision and participation in the monthly IGC branch meetings.

## APPENDIX 6: Guidance Services Areas under review for development

The list of areas under review for development is not exhaustive and is constantly being reviewed as new suggestions are offered for the improvement of the Guidance Services in OLM. A more flexible approach is being implemented to reflect the students' specific needs, rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. To ensure the students' voice is heard, a number of surveys have been carried out with the students, namely in relation to Study Skills, Career Guidance and College Awareness Week. Based on the survey results, the focus for the current school year is to deliver *ad hoc* career guidance, based on the specific needs of the current 6<sup>th</sup> Year groups; likewise, all events (talks, careers fair) during College Awareness Week will revolve around the careers of interest as well as careers that might appeal to senior cycle students. The survey has highlighted an interest in apprenticeship programmes and self-employment as well as the more traditional routes of university and colleges of further education. The guidance team aims to work with groups within the same class based on their career/educational interests, to ensure all are equally catered for.

Study skills also emerge as an important aspect of teaching and learning in OLM. The students recommend that study skills workshops are extended to non-exam years as they prove beneficial for all year groups. Comments include: very informative and useful, an eye-opener, good information, I feel more confident, I have learned new study techniques. Both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Year students have increased their understanding of how to study by one point each.

Renewed focus is also on the following:

- Address the targets identified within the DEIS plan, with particular focus on areas such as Retention, Examination Attainment and Education Transition
- Consolidate support for 1<sup>st</sup> Year students who are struggling with transition from primary to secondary school (support for some)
- Foster and celebrating our culturally diverse community
- Improve the team approach to student care and welfare
- Involve parents and ensuring a more active participation of parents/guardians in the school's activities
- Achieve the TA21 targets for 2023-2024 within the three pillars of Mentoring, Pathways to college and Leadership in learning. Among the objectives, the Guidance Department aims to extend TA21 training to the teaching staff, namely in relation to the areas of Leadership and Change Management in Education and Inclusive Education: equality and diversity. Further actions include engaging more with the local higher and further educational institutions, involving parents as mentors
- Attend Continuous Professional Development to ensure policy updates and best practice is followed at all times. Among others, CBT training and Restorative Practice training
- Promote and cultivate a whole school approach to College Awareness Week. Evaluating the success of CAW. Complete a SWOT analysis to identify areas of improvement and



consolidate best practice

- Follow up with outgoing Leaving Certificate Students to get data on students' progression. Act upon data, celebrate success and identify areas of improvement
- Roll out students' survey in relation to guidance on a regular basis. Extend surveys to Junior Cycle students

The action plan will be reviewed and evaluated at the end of the school year in order to gauge success, address areas of improvement and implement changes if necessary. The review will occur through additional surveys, which may be extended to all year groups, analysis of 6<sup>th</sup> Year progression onto college or the world of work, discussions at staff meetings as part of the whole school guidance approach and by learning from best practice during CPD hours.