

# *Desmond College*

## **Career and Guidance Counselling**



**Academic Year 2019-2020**

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission statement of Desmond College:

*'Beimis go Leir ag obair le cheile'*

The Guidance Service while working to the schools mission statement developed a simple statement relevant to their own specific needs that is *"to help students make informed personal and career decisions, set realistic personal and career goals and develop the skills necessary to accomplish these goals. The service also offers students support in coping with personal problems or academic concerns"*.

### **Aims:**

We offer a full range of interventions and activities which assist pupils to make choices about their lives. For second level pupils these choices are focused in a developmental way on three key areas:

- personal;
- educational;
- career.

### **Objectives:**

At the end of the school year students will have experienced:

- Guidance in educational and personal learning management.
- Vocational exploration and information.
- Individual and/or Group Counselling will have been available for all students on request and/or on referral.
- Students will have access to information which is appropriate for their personal, educational and vocational development.
- Parents will have met with the School Guidance Counsellors at Information evenings, parent-teacher meetings, at organised Guidance Meetings and on request.
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds will be fully informed and supported throughout their schooling and in making decisions for their future.
- Students' needs – with regards to the Guidance Counselling Service - will be evaluated, and in partnership with staff and the Principal/ School Management, planning for the future will be ongoing.

### **Core Activities of the Guidance Service**

The Guidance Services core activities are:

**1. Personal Counselling and Development**

- a. Promotion of self-development and self-awareness
- b. Assertiveness
- c. Team work
- d. Communication
- e. Informed Decision Making
- f. Action Plans to achieve Objectives

**2. Educational Guidance**

- a. Interests & Abilities
- b. Study Skills
- c. Time Management
- d. Stress Management
- e. Examination Preparation
- f. Subject Choices and Combinations
- g. Educational Links

**3. Career Guidance**

- a. Career Planning – routes and paths
- b. Career Development trends
- c. Labour Market trends
- d. Careers and Occupations
- e. Third Level Colleges
- f. PLC
- g. Training / Apprenticeships etc
- h. Sourcing Jobs
- i. Curriculum Vitae
- j. Interview Skills

The principles that guide these activities are:

- Guidance service is a whole school concern
- Communication and collaboration with subject teachers, class teachers, year heads, pastoral care team, learning support, colleges, Universities, mid West IGC meetings, outside agencies, parents and management.
- Developmental and supportive to staff and students
- Accessible and open
- Confidentiality in counselling and assessment activities
- Education and Awareness
- Ongoing reviewing and evaluation
- Transparency and accountability

**SCHOOL GUIDANCE TEAM**

<b>Kerrie Collins</b>	<b>Career and Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>Vourneen Gavin-Barry</b>	<b>Principal</b>
<b>Elizabeth Cregan</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
<b>Anne Hannon</b>	<b>SEN Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Aisling Ryan</b>	<b>SPHE Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Bernadine Enright</b>	<b>HSCL</b>

## **Role of Guidance Counsellor**

The role of the guidance counsellor can be categorised into:

- Educational Guidance and Counselling
- Career Guidance and Counselling
- Personal Guidance and Counselling
- Individual Counselling
- Development Programmes

### **1. Educational Guidance and Counselling**

This involves the provision of information on educational opportunities, the guidance of students in decision-making and the support of students in their choices of individual education goals.

#### **Application**

The guidance counsellor discusses with the student the students' educational potential, educational opportunities, course choice and outcomes. Educational guidance involves the provision of information on further education. The guidance counsellor seeks, at all times, to match the individual's ability with education opportunities.

Educational Guidance can involve working with the student in the following areas:

- Counselling for learning-related problems
- Decision-making skills
- Goal-setting skills
- Motivational skills
- Study skills
- Self esteem and confidence

### **2. Career Guidance and Counselling**

This involves facilitating the student's career and vocational decision-making in a non-directive way. Students seeking careers information are engaged in a proactive process.

#### **Application**

Careers education is a process whereby the guidance counsellor makes information on career areas available to the student. The guidance counsellor encourages the student to discuss preferred options and to make decisions accordingly. In order to facilitate this discussion, information can be accessed by the student through researching careers literature, using information and communications technology and visiting exhibitions.

### **3. Personal Guidance and Counselling**

This involves the making of choices on a wide range of personal issues including self-esteem, confidence, goal setting, assertiveness, etc.

### **Application**

Personal guidance and counselling is an interactive process between counsellor and student that involves working with the individual in a one-to-one setting. It involves facilitating and assisting the students with the following issues:

- Conflict
- Coping with crisis
- Coping with transitions
- Cultural conflicts
- Decision-making
- Developmental awareness
- Emotional
- Promoting and developing personal awareness
- Relationships
- Social pressures and expectations

## **4. Individual Counselling**

“Counselling denotes a professional relationship between a trained counsellor and a client. This relationship is usually person-to-person, although it may sometimes involve more than two people. It is designed to help clients to understand and clarify their life space and to learn to reach their self-determined goals through meaningful, well-informed choices and through resolution of problems of an emotional and interpersonal nature.”

*Burke & Steffire, 1979*

### **Application**

Individual counselling involves one-to-one sessions between the guidance counsellor and student. A counselling session may involve the following process:

- Create a friendly and encouraging atmosphere
- Establish the broad purpose of the session
- Gather information
- Give information
- Identify the needs of the student
- Clarify the next steps to be taken
- Summarise topics and issues covered during the session

This process is facilitated using core-counselling skills and the counsellor, evaluating their role and how they conducted the session, maintains a summary reflection record. The following headings are typical questions answered in this self-evaluation process.

- What I see the student’s main concern was ...
- The way the student interacted with me was ....
- What I was trying to do in the session was ....
- The way I felt about myself as a counsellor was ....
- The way the session went was ....
- What I think the student gained from the session was ....

Confidential record keeping procedures are adhered to and maintained in a secure area.

## **5. Development Programmes**

Development programmes are designed to assist students in areas such as social, personal and vocational development. These programmes aim to assist students with decision-making, goal-setting, self-esteem, study skills, behaviour modification etc.

### **Application**

Development programmes are delivered in a variety of settings and using a variety of methods to suit individual and class group needs. These can include class/group or one-to-one sessions. Direct involvement in class group work enables the students to develop a relationship with guidance counsellor and they are then more likely to access the guidance services being offered.

The Guidance Counsellor endeavours to create a safe environment where students can feel respected, accepted and understood. The counsellor's role is to listen, to help clarify issues that are troubling students, to help them explore their feelings, thoughts, beliefs and behaviours.

Counselling provides students with an opportunity to gain greater awareness of their individual circumstances and to identify choices for change. The Guidance Counsellor's role is to support student through this process of change and to empower them to make life-enhancing choices as they move forward.

**Guidance Counsellors do not make decisions for students.**

## APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK IN COUNSELLING

*"We see our purpose as assisting students to develop personal skills and inner strength so that they can create happiness in their own lives and in the lives of others".*

At Desmond College an eclectic mix from the different theories of counselling is used. However, it is essential that the Guidance Counsellor works from a fundamental base of theoretical knowledge and self-awareness.

The Guidance Counsellor's expertise lies within themselves, in their personality, their values and in the skills acquired and continue to acquire in practice. Establishing a positive working relationship by communicating the core qualities of empathy, acceptance and genuineness is an essential backdrop for counselling in individual, group or class settings.

- The main task is to establish a **working relationship**. The guidance counselor assists students tell their stories and, if appropriate, ask them to choose a specific problem situation to work on. We believe it may be helpful to assist students to look for ways in which they may be communicating, acting and thinking less than effectively.
- We believe **genuineness** allows the development of trust between the student and the Guidance Counsellor. It is important that we understand our own emotions and are aware of our reactions so that we can concentrate on the feelings of our students.
- Trying to **understand** what the student is feeling, from the students' point of view is essential in order for us to be effective. Failure to convey this understanding could leave the student feeling isolated and alone with their fears. This incorporates a regard for the student's value as a person and a concern for their welfare.
- The ability to create a **climate** where there is warmth, enthusiasm, acceptance, respect and interpersonal sensitivity is central for effective counselling. These highly developed interpersonal characteristics are coupled with a high degree of academic competence. There is a change of roles from being a teacher to that of being a guidance counsellor. As a teacher, we can be judgmental, evaluative and directive in our responses to students. As a guidance counsellor, we need to be able to balance support and challenge for the student and to see that counselling is a process.
- We believe that **client-centred** counselling is effective for individual and group counselling. The solution to problems, the choices, and challenges confronting students can be within their capabilities. As we use **effective listening** and responding skills, we create an accepting and empathic environment for all students. These students progress because they feel understood, have clarified their thoughts and feelings and may move freely towards better decisions.
- We are very aware that some students will not achieve their goals through their own self-directed efforts. In these situations, we will be more helpful, active, suggesting choices, perhaps challenging and directing. Our approach will be responsive to the **individual or group needs**, goals, cultures and environments. We help the students stand back from their difficulties. We help them to look at them in different ways and from different viewpoints. We help them to ask questions from themselves. The answers lead to a greater self-knowledge, and by looking at this information and learning how to process it, we may have empowered our students to deal more efficiently with future problems, making them aware of alternatives and choices.
- We seek to **empower** the student by putting the student in charge of the process. As Rogers suggests, change will happen more quickly, when the person who seeks the change is at the heart of and in charge of the process. The counselling process may develop to assist the students to change their **thinking, feelings or behavior** so that

the problem situation is addressed more effectively than in the past. We assist the students to *set goals* and to develop and implement strategies to attain these goals.

We believe this model is useful in personal and group counselling situations but we need to be aware of:

- avoiding to do too much too soon
- possessing instant expertise
- adapting the model for extended helping

The Guidance Department is constantly evolving and adapting in response to the changing needs of the school and the changing profile of its student body. We ensure that students with Special Education Needs are catered for in the department. We acknowledge the support of the school management, the general teaching staff, parents, liaison officers, college registrars, etc. in facilitating and promoting the continued development of the Guidance Department in the school.

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPALS**

*As Guidance Counsellor at Desmond College I understand that it is my duty to comply with the Code of Ethics as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors in 2002. When faced with an ethical dilemma we engage in the formal decision making process as outlined in Appendix A of the Code of Ethics. I am aware of the ethical issues concerning competence, conduct, confidentiality, consent, testing, evaluation and research.*

*“Guidance Counsellors respect the dignity, integrity and welfare of their clients. They work in ways which promote clients’ control over their own lives, and they respect clients’ ability to make decisions and engage in personal change in the light of their own beliefs and values.”*

*(Code of Ethics I.G.C. 2002).*

In light of the above aims, the Guidance Department have the following objectives:

- Respect differences and understand the cultural background of students whom we work with. Not to discriminate against students based on age, colour, culture, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status. Awareness of how our own culture impacts on our beliefs in the counselling process.
- Inform students of the purposes, goals and benefits of counselling. Provide students with an explanation of the limitations at the beginning of counselling sessions.
- Respect confidentiality and avoid unwarranted disclosures of confidential information.
- Understand that confidentiality does not apply when disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to the student and others. Legal requirements may also demand that information be revealed. In these cases, we will consult with the Principal.
- Obtain permission from students to disclose information to others. Only essential information will be revealed.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality in creating, storing, accessing and destroying records of students that we have on computer or in files.
- Endeavor to be accurate, honest and unbiased in our reports.
- Competent in the use of computers and try to ensure that students understand the purposes and limitations of the computer applications in guidance work.
- Practice guidance and counselling within the boundaries of our competence. Commitment to in-service to expand and maintain our professional competence.
- Responsible for the appropriate application, scoring and interpretation of various tests in guidance and counselling. Promote the welfare and best interests of the student in the utilisation of these assessment techniques.
- Not to use our position for unjustified personal gains or relationships with clients.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GUIDANCE SERVICE**

The guidance service has responsibilities to:

- Conduct interest inventories and career search inventories (using web-based, computer software and practical tests)
- Consult with management and other staff
- Create and maintain networks with subject teachers to maximise learning support for students
- Deliver personal development, study skills and information sessions
- Develop and evaluate programmes
- Develop progressive career and educational paths for students
- Identify students needs through consultation with student council
- Keep records
- Manage guidance and counselling service
- Manage information
- Network with other professionals, colleges, community services etc.
- Offer a confidential and professional service
- Refer students to other services

#### **Methods used by the service:**

- Consultation, discussions and brainstorming
- Group guidance sessions
- Individual guidance and /or counselling sessions
- Linkages with colleges and professional bodies
- Visits to and open day attendance at colleges

#### **Resources used by the service:**

- Career office and library resources
- Guest speakers
- ICT
- Interests, abilities and aptitude assessments
- External services e.g. Psychologists, etc
- Management and staff

### **GUIDANCE PROCEDURES**

### **INFORMATION GATHERING AND DISSEMINATION**

Information is an important component in guidance and counselling. It informs all aspects of career, vocational and educational opportunity.

#### **Application**

Current information is gathered, organised and disseminated to provide the student with as much information as possible on the widest range of options with the goal of enabling the student to make informed career decisions.

The effective management of a comprehensive careers office/library and up to date notice-boards facilitates pupils in gaining information about

- 3<sup>rd</sup> level Courses and institutions
- Careers
- Study Skills
- College open days
  
- Careers exhibitions
- Helping agencies
- Legal rights
- Research

The availability of these resources is communicated to all classes at the beginning of the school year.

The school library also had a dedicated section for careers information

### **REFERRAL SERVICE**

Referral services involve the guidance counsellor making and accepting referrals on behalf of and with the consent of the student. Referrals can also be made to the Guidance Counsellor by management using appropriate procedure. A student can also self-refer.

#### **Application**

The guidance counsellor accepts referrals and, when necessary and appropriate, refers students to other professionals for specialised services. The guidance counsellor working closely with/through the Designated Liaison Person (Vourneen Gavin-Barry) initiates the referral and supports the student at all stages of the process. A list of all referral agencies is available in the Guidance Department.

Referrals by any member of staff and management is recorded in a 'Referral Diary'. This provides a record of when and by whom the referral was made. The Guidance Counsellor will decide on the speed to which the pupil must be seen. The case will be discussed in the weekly care meetings and depending on the student's need he/she is assigned to the guidance counsellor or member of the SST

### **APPOINTMENTS**

The Guidance Counsellor operates an 'open door' policy. Students are welcome to call at any time. The class teacher is informed immediately (either by the student with a permission slip or by the school office depending on the circumstance). Students must make appointments for less urgent circumstances. They will be given a permission slip to show their subject teacher.

## **RECORDING**

Referrals are noted in the referrals diary.

When an appointment/intervention takes place a record is kept in the students file in the Guidance office.

SST information is recorded in the SST book.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

As laid out in our Guidance Policy, all students have the right to confidentiality in their dealings with the Guidance Service. This right is NOT universal however. The following Confidentiality Statement, in line with Child Protection Guidelines, is adhered to:

*“Anything discussed between student and member of staff is confidential, unless information revealed which suggests that there is a risk to pupil or another person. In the event of reportage, the pupil will also be consulted”*

## **PRESENTATIONS TO PARENTS**

A number of information evenings take place each year for parents/guardians

- 1) Welcome meeting to parents/guardians of 1<sup>st</sup> years in September
- 2) Parents Study Skills evening
- 3) Information night for 6<sup>th</sup> year parents/guardians in December to pass across information on CAO/Finance/HEAR/DARE
- 4) Senior Cycle Options for students entering TY / LCA / 5<sup>th</sup> year (Subject choice)
- 5) Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year parents night in May
- 6) Parent-Teacher meetings

## **Learning Intentions in Career and Guidance Lessons**

The Career Guidance departments learning intentions will be in compliance with the Desmond College learning intentions. The Career Guidance teacher will devise the learning intention for each block of work. This will be shared with the pupils and documented at the beginning of a lesson or a block of work. The teacher will use questioning and written work to assess the learning of the pupils. A summary at the end of a lesson or block of lessons will reassure that the learning intentions are in place. The teacher will use Blooms Taxonomy Verbs to aid the construction of the learning intentions (see appendix for Blooms Taxonomy Verbs).

Examples of Learning Intentions include

- *We are learning to describe the process of applying to courses after school.*
- *We are learning to distinguish between college requirements, subject requirements and expected points requirements for courses on the CAO system.*

## **PSYCHOMETRIC AND OTHER TESTINGS**

In Desmond College we are committed to the use of psychometric testings as a tool that assists us in helping our students to obtain a better self understanding and providing students with appropriate extra support if necessary. The Guidance and Learning Support Teams administer a number of standardised tests during the year

### ● **Entrance Examinations**

- 1) General reading test
- 2) CAT 3 test for entrance examinations in 2019

Results help to ensure pupils are receiving the most appropriate education when in Desmond College

Parents may request results from the school Guidance Counsellor

### ● **3<sup>rd</sup> Year DAT Testings**

Conducted to help students have an idea of their abilities for subject choice

Results are given to the pupils in an individual appointment. The pupil's best three- five areas are highlighted. If requested all areas will be disseminated to the pupil or parent.

The DAT provides useful estimations of 8 different aptitudes (Verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, abstract reasoning, perceptual speed and accuracy, space relations, spelling, language usage and educational aptitude).

### ● **DRT Testing**

The DRT Test was used as the Entrance Examination in March 2019. It is deemed more appropriate for our pupil intake and provides information on specific learning difficulties of the cohort. The SEN co-ordinator, Resource teachers and Guidance Counsellor were trained to use this test in April 2012.

The DRT test will also be used to supply extra information to students, parents or otherwise. It will be conducted by the Guidance Counsellor at an agreed time.

The DRT measures the student's developed ability to reason with verbal and numerical symbols and shapes (i.e. present level of ability). It has three batteries : Verbal, Quantitative, and non-verbal.

### ● **WRAT Testing**

The WRAT test is used to assess pupils for RACE accommodations. It is administered by the SEN co-ordinator or resource teachers at allocated timetabled times.

The WRAT is a measure of basic academic skills in the area of word reading, spelling & reading comprehensions.

## **SUBJECT CHOICE – JUNIOR CYCLE**

Incoming first year students are asked to make a selection of subjects on enrolment. Prior to the School Open Night, the Principal visits all the local primary schools and informs them about the school and presents them with a brochure with information about the school.

During the school Open Night and Parents Information Evening the new students and their parents/guardians will have the opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have about their subject choice.

All Classrooms and specialist rooms have displays of materials relating to each subject, teachers are on hand to answer any questions.

An information evening is held in May for parents of incoming First Years where presentations are made by Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor and HSCL. The SEN coordinator also attends to answer any questions parents may have.

In Choosing their subjects, students are required to do:  
Irish (unless exempted by the DES), English, Mathematics, French/German/Spanish, Science, CSPE, SPHE, PE, Wellbeing tutor period, Religion and IT.  
They must choose 3 subjects from the following  
Business, Art, Music, Technical Graphics, Home Economics, Materials Technology (Metal) and Materials Technology (Wood), History, Geography  
The 1<sup>st</sup> year students will be offered TASTER subjects. In this, pupils will study each of the option subjects until mid-term before choosing their preference.  
We have been able to offer students their 4 choice subjects to date.

Another information meeting for First Year parents is held at the end of September. The meeting is attended by Principal, Deputy Principal, First Year Head and Tutors. The Guidance Department also organises a presentation for parents on study skills.

## **SUBJECT CHOICE – SENIOR CYCLE**

The Guidance Counsellor meets with Third Year students (during the second term) and outlines the Senior Cycle options available in Desmond College – Transition Year, Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational programme and Leaving Certificate Applied. Decision Making skills is done in conjunction with SPHE classes. The TY co-ordinator and LCA co-ordinator also meet with the students to fully inform them of the courses on offer.

The Guidance Counsellor outlines the subject choices for those (3<sup>rd</sup> year and TY) intending to continue to 5<sup>th</sup> year and intend to complete the Leaving Certificate.

Subject teachers are asked to address all pupils on the content of their subject in Senior Cycle.

An Information Night is also organised for parents/guardians of 3<sup>rd</sup> year and TY students in order to outline the various programmes available in Senior Cycle.

Each 3<sup>rd</sup> year and TY pupil is met individually by the Guidance Counsellor to feedback DATS results and to discuss subject options and programme choices. Websites and points for research are passed across to all pupils.

In choosing their subjects for 5<sup>th</sup> year, all students study English, Mathematics and Irish (unless exempted by the DES) and LCVP. Students then choose four subjects from the following list:

Biology	Business	History	Music	Chemistry
Accounting	Geography	Physics	Home Economics	
Art with Crafts	Agricultural Science	DCG	Engineering	
French	German	Construction studies	Spanish	

Students complete a preliminary subject choice form, where they indicate their four subjects of choice. The Deputy Principal then manually puts subjects into four option bands in such a way as to accommodate the maximum number of students. Students may pick one subject from each option. They are told that subjects will only be offered subject to sufficient numbers choosing the subject.

There is flexibility to change subject choices for the month of September, provided the classes are not full.

### **Procedures adopted where students want to change level**

- Students have the opportunity to and are encouraged to study subjects at higher level
- If the subject proves difficult the student consults with the subject teacher and Guidance Counsellor
- All parties consider the implications of changing levels and how this may impact on course choice at Third Level (affecting entry requirements)
- Written parental permission is then sought on understanding of possible career implications and the letter is signed by school management, subject teacher and filed in the Guidance Counsellors filing system
- The teacher must initiate a form (see appendix) where the teachers, guidance counsellor, Year Head and Principal/Deputy Principal must sign to ensure that full communication is made to all.

### **Procedures for dropping a subject**

- Where this occurs the Principal/Deputy principal is notified since there may be timetabling/supervision issues
- The student consults with his/her subject teacher and the Guidance Counsellor
- Subject requirements for certain courses are discussed with Guidance Counsellor and the student
- The teacher must initiate a form (see appendix) where the teachers, guidance counsellor and tutor must sign to ensure that full communication is made to all.
- Having considered all relevant implications, written parental permission is sought and signed by management and filed in the Guidance Counsellors filing system

## **ATTENDANCE AT CAREER DAYS/ COLLEGE OPEN DAYS**

- Permission is sought from management
- Students from appropriate year group(s) are informed of the event
- A Letter is signed by Principal and Guidance Counsellor and given to each student for parents/guardians outlining the details of the event and the cost incurred
- Permission slip and cost is requested from parents/guardians
- The school's code of behaviour applies to all students on these trips outside the school

### **Annual Career Visits**

- Higher Options Conference
  - Mid West IGC Careers day (UL)
  - UL, LIT and MIC Open Days
  - ITT Open DAY
  - FAS Training Centre Trip (LCA)
- Newcastlewest Chamber Of Commerce Careers Fair 'Gear your Career'

## **ICT AND GUIDANCE**

Students are entitled to receive accurate, relevant and up-to-date information to enable them to make informed choices. As information is continually changing, Information Technology has a vital role to play

*If you give a man a fish he will eat for a day.  
Teach a Man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime (Confucius)*

It is suggested that students should have access to the Computer room at Guidance Class time if at all possible.

The Guidance room and internet access is open on MONDAY and WEDNESDAY lunchtimes.

## **STUDY SKILLS**

The Guidance Department in Desmond College promotes Study skills in a number of ways. It is arranged that the school has two separate Study Skills weeks (one in October, one in February). During these two weeks students are immersed in study skills presentations by the Guidance Counsellor, SPHE teachers, Wellbeing teachers, subject teachers and class teachers.

Parents are also invited to attend an information evening on Study skills.

Students with learning/health difficulties, or. Students whose first language is not English need particular support in relation to developing good study skills. The Guidance Counsellor liaises with the SEN co-ordinator and learning support teachers to provide additional supports to these students to ensure that they develop good study habits.

Internet sites such as Scoil Net, SKOOL.ie and careersportal that offer advice on study skills are listed in a handout that is given to students.

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Since the introduction of the LCA, TY and LCVP programme, work experience has been availed of by Senior Students in Desmond College. The arrangements for Work experience are as follows:

- Each student meets with the LCA co-ordinator/ LCVP co-ordinator/TY co-ordinator and guidance Counsellor to discuss the various options available to them.
- Students are then encouraged to arrange their own placements and to make the school aware of the company/organisation and to provide contact details etc.
- The company/organisation is then written to supplying the school/LCETB insurance details
- During the placement contact is made with the employer to check everything is in order
- Upon completion of the work experience placement the school receives a completed assessment sheet for each student from the employer
- The student will write an evaluation of the work experience appropriate to their programme of study

## **COUNSELLING**

At times, young people need help in meeting their own personal, as well as society's challenges. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with students (usually by appointment) to help them deal with these issues relating to low self-esteem, relationships, study and exam pressures, bereavement and substance abuse etc

The approach is always to encourage students to reflect on their thoughts and actions and to empower them to take control and to deal with challenging situations that they may encounter.

As stated in this document, students can attend counselling by self-referring or following on referral from parents/guardians or by referral from management, class teacher, subject teachers or year heads. The referral may also come from the Student Support team. Where referrals come from other sources, e.g. friends, the Guidance Counsellor will usually consult with the class teacher/year head and Principal/Deputy principal. The Guidance Counsellor will at all times follow the agreed ethical principals. The guidance counsellor will encourage the student to tell his/her parents/guardians that he/she has made contact with the school's guidance service.

It is the parents/guardians right to stop their child attending counselling, if they so wish, and it is also the student's choice as to whether he/she wishes to continue to meet with the Guidance Counsellor

In personal counselling, the school's confidentiality rules are applied. Records of personal counselling sessions are kept and are usually written up as soon as possible after a session. In the event of regular counselling sessions the Guidance Counselling is advised and expected to avail of the Supervision of the IGC. This is an invaluable source of advice and support for the Guidance Counsellor.

## GUIDANCE ALLOCATION

The Guidance and Counselling department has 22 hours allocated to it and is serviced by a qualified Guidance Counsellor. There is a dedicated office with a fully resourced office. Public display areas are located near the Guidance library for brochures and resources from external colleges as well as visual display of notices of upcoming events. Notice-boards throughout the school also display information on career guidance as well as raising awareness of personal and social issues.

The guidance service is well equipped with technological aids such as computers, printers, internet access, all with access to qualifax, careersportal, etc. Worksheets on a number of topics are available for individual as well as class work.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Time per week</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>SPHE Guidance Wellbeing Tutor Period</b>	<b>1 class per week Negotiated classes 1 class per week</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>SPHE Guidance Wellbeing tutor Period</b>	<b>1 class per week Negotiated classes 1 class per week</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>SPHE Guidance Wellbeing tutor Period</b>	<b>1 class per week Negotiated classes 1 class per week</b>
<b>Transition Year</b>	<b>Career Guidance Personal Reflection</b>	<b>1 Class per week 1 Class per week</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>LCVP Guidance (Non LCVP)</b>	<b>2classes per week</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Career Guidance LCVP</b>	<b>1 class per week 2 classes per week</b>

## DESTINATION ANALYSIS

The Guidance Counsellor has the role of tracking the destination of each Leaving Certificate student when they leave Desmond College. This is done by

- Writing to each past pupil, with a stamped self addressed envelope requesting the information (see appendix)
- Following up any outstanding non-replies
- Record all information and store in the Career-guidance office
- Information also compiled for Principal, Staff, LCETB, SSE planning and BoM.

### *Numeracy Language*

- CAO Points calculator
- Grants €€€€€€ SUSI

- Tariff's (UCAS)
- Grades
- Tables
- Graphs
- STEM careers (Engineering, financial mathematics, accounting .....)
- Student contribution (fees)
- Living expenses after school

### ***Numeracy Moments***

- Using the Points Calculator grid to decipher predicted CAO points
- Comparing the CAO Points awarded to Higher and Ordinary Level in subjects
- Calculations of the SUSI grant and using the information of income in their particular household do predict finance expected

### **Stakeholders**

- Students
- Subject Teachers / Tutors
- Year Heads
- Student support team
- Pastoral Care Team
- Learning Support
- Management Team
- Educational Psychologists
- CAMHS
- Social Workers / Clinics
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Institutions and Professional Bodies
- Parents
- Past Pupils
- NCW Chamber of Commerce
- Employers
- School Student Council
- Junior Liaison Officers

### **DEIS SCHOOL : Implications for the Guidance Service**

Desmond College is a DEIS school and this brings it's own implications for the Guidance Service in the school. Before the budget cuts in December 2011 a DEIS school would be entitled to additional guidance hours so as to cater for the needs of it's pupils. Desmond College would have been allocated 27.5 hours.

Methods employed by Guidance Service to cater for the needs of the pupils in Desmond College

- LCA pupils taught by Guidance Counsellor. Programme delivered is relevant their needs and wants. It is aimed to motivate pupils to continue studying and to develop realistic future plans for these pupils.
- ACCESS programme in Universities are highlighted in guidance classes, individual appointments, parents evenings, notice-boards and by written letter.
- Guidance Counsellor is a member of the JCSP team
- Guidance Counsellor is available to all pupils. The service must advertise itself to ensure all pupils are catered for.
- There are many opportunities available to school leavers, other than college courses. PLC's, FAS courses, apprenticeships and working opportunities are all given equal attention in information giving sessions.
- Help is given to pupils to fill in application forms etc
- Information regarding grants, scholarships and funding is given to all pupils and parents.
- The guidance service works closely with School Completion Programme and Home School Community Liaison officer.
- Tracking of pupils throughout their schooling is completed
- Tracking of pupils when they leave Desmond College is completed

## **INSERVICE**

Desmond College is committed to the inservice training of all staff involved in guidance.

Courses attended

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Training</b>
Kerrie Collins	Tuesday afternoon – IGC Mid West Branch meetings Open Days – UL, MIC, LIT Careers Exhibition – Higher Options Careers Exhibition – Patrickswell CAO conference TY Taster Course – ITT IGC annual conferences Friends for Life programme NCGE – Test use training Bereavement support training – Milford Hospice Safe Talk Training Assist Training
SST	SST training – LCETB
Care Team	Care Team Training – LCETB
SEN Staff and GC	NEPS presentation on psychometric testing

All staff	NEPS presentation
3 members of care team	Circle training
2 members of staff	Peer Mediation

### **Guidance Counsellor links**

#### ***WITH PRINCIPAL***

The Guidance Counsellor meets with Principal early each day and in the evening to discuss any issues with. There is also numerous informal meetings throughout the school day. Both are on the Guidance Team, SST team, Care team, Planning team

#### ***WITH DEPUTY PRINCIPAL***

The Guidance Counsellor meets with the Deputy Principal numerous times within each school day. Both are on the Guidance Team, SST team, Care team, Planning team

#### ***WITH CLASS TUTORS***

The Guidance Counsellor meets Class Tutors on a very regular basis or when necessary during the year. Class teachers refer students to the guidance counsellor and they receive feedback.

#### ***WITH YEAR HEADS***

The Guidance Counsellor meets each year's head on a very regular basis and also attends the weekly care team meetings with the Year Heads. Year Heads refer students to the guidance counsellor and they receive feedback.

#### ***WITH TY CO-ORDINATOR***

The Guidance Counsellor is the TY co-ordinator and therefore is very involved in the programme.

#### ***WITH LCVP CO-ORDINATOR***

The LCVP Co-ordinator and the guidance counsellor meet on a regular basis(not timetabled) and link up to organise guidance related activities for the students in LCVP. The Guidance Counsellor also teaches the C.V. and Career Investigation elements of the LCVP course.

#### ***WITH SPHE CO-ORDINATOR/TEACHERS***

The SPHE Co-ordinator is a member of the Guidance Team and links with the Guidance Counsellor at meetings and both work together with the SPHE teachers to organise events for students. The guidance Counsellor works very closely with SPHE in teaching many pastoral and educational elements such as Study skills and Friendship

#### ***WITH LCA CO-ORDINATOR***

The LCA co-ordinator and the Guidance Counsellor meet on a regular basis (not timetabled) to discuss pupils in the programme. Support for pupils on work experience is also provided

where necessary. The Guidance Counsellor teaches the VPG module to LCA2. The LCA co-ordinator and guidance counsellor attend the weekly care team meetings.

### ***WITH STUDENT COUNCIL***

The student council is aware of the support of the Guidance Counsellor. They have often used this support.

### ***WITH CO-ORDINATOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS***

The Guidance Counsellor and SEN co-ordinator have a timetabled lesson to meet each week. Both the Co-ordinator of Special needs and the Guidance Counsellor work closely together with First Year assessments/monitoring, RACE applications, progress of students, referral of students for further assessments/applications to higher or further education and training courses etc.

### ***WITH THE COMMUNITY***

The wider local community is a valuable resource to the school. The Guidance Counsellor has many links in the community. This is evidenced in their support for

- Work Experience/Work Shadowing programmes
- Guest Speakers
- Fundraising/Sponsorship
- Chamber of Commerce Careers Fair

### ***WITH NEPS***

- NEPS helps the school support students in terms of their learning behaviour, social and emotional developments.
- NEPS psychologists work with the school community, in partnership with teachers, parents/guardians and students in identifying educational needs.
- In consultation with the Learning Support teachers, Year Heads, Principal and Guidance Counsellor, psychological assessment may be commissioned as required.

### ***WITH LOCAL SOCIAL WORKERS***

Desmond College supports the HSE and seeks to inform them through the designated staff member, should the school become aware of any child who is not receiving adequate and/or protection. Senior management consults with the duty or case social worker as required. The Principal represents the school at all case conferences convened to discuss the progress of any students within our care.

### ***WITH COLLEGES/ADMISSION OFFICERS/FAS/FAILTE IRELAND***

- Regular phone/email contact regarding pupils issues as needed
- Invitations extended to local colleges/training agencies etc. to visit the school and meet with students
- Guidance Counsellor attends information sessions in colleges as often as possible
- Students attend a number of college Open Days throughout the school year.
- The University Access office is invited to attend Parent information evening to detail HEAR/DARE.
- Desmond College is involved in the Broadening Horizons programme with the UL Access office.

### ***WITH FEEDER PRIMARY SCHOOLS***

- Invitations to local Primary Schools Sixth Class pupils and teachers to attend the Open Night in Desmond College
- Informally and Formally reporting on incoming students behavioural ,emotional and academic needs
- Incoming students and their families invited to the annual Open Night and Information Session for parents/guardians.

### ***WITH HSCL***

The HSCL and Guidance Counsellor are members of the core team and meet formally on a weekly basis. Both are also members of the guidance planning team. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with the HSCL officer if information needs to be transferred about any pupil in our care.

### ***WITH SCP***

The SCP officer and Guidance Counsellor are members of the care team and meet formally on a weekly basis. Both are also members of the guidance planning team. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet with the School Completion Programme officer if information needs to be transferred about any pupil in our care.

## **THE NEED FOR WHOLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE PLAN**

The *Education Act, 1998* requires the management of a school to develop a plan based on the needs of the school. The school guidance plan is an integral part of the School Development Plan. Appropriate guidance is a legal entitlement as schools are required by the Act to “ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance” (*Education Act, 1998, 9c*), this includes those from minority groups and those with special needs. This statement outlines for all the partners in education the central role that guidance plays in the lives of all students. The *Guidelines for Schools on the implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998* document sets to one side the stereotypical image of guidance being the remit of one department in a school and places it at the centre of the students’ whole education. The challenge is to ensure that the broader definition of guidance becomes embedded in the whole school programme. The engagement of the school in guidance planning will assist in broadening the concept of guidance beyond the guidance counsellor. It will also encourage the exploration of the guidance programme, identify areas for improvement, and promote greater guidance access for all students.

In order to ensure that the process of developing the guidance plan would be democratic and transparent a questionnaire was distributed to staff to access their opinions on guidance and the provision of guidance service in the school. The questionnaire also asked them to identify areas within the service which they feel need to be reviewed and developed.

Participation and help were requested from key willing and proactive teachers from which a planning group was formed. The group are Kerrie Collins (guidance counsellor), Vourneen Gavin-Barry (Principal), Elizabeth Cregan (Deputy Principal), Anne Hannon (SEN Co-ordinator), Aisling Ryan (SPHE Co-ordinator) and Bernadine Enright (HSCL)

The role of the planning group is to focus on the guidance support for **all** students in the school, to provide a discussion forum for guidance related matters, to take stock of what work is currently being done in the area of guidance, to focus on areas that are in need of development and agree on the prioritisation of the work and to arrange for the monitoring, implementation, and evaluation of proposals aimed at improving the guidance programme.

The function of the group is to lead the strategic planning process and be key players in the writing / construction of the final plan. Their existence provided the opportunity to link key stakeholders in a two-way process of communication and inevitably foster a better understanding of the guidance service in the school. In ascertaining stakeholders’ views the following methods were employed:

- Questionnaires
- Formal Meetings
- Informal Discussions

Consultation and discussion took place on the ethos and mission statement of Desmond College and on the inclusion and relevance of a school guidance policy as a central part of the guidance plan. An audit of all relevant policies including accepted procedures will also be carried out. Guidance policies, which relate to personal, social, educational and career development of the student, must also be included for reference.

In summary the guidance plan is an attempt to set down what is already happening in good practice and to:

- focus on areas for improvement
- implement strategies for improvement

- evaluate their effectiveness

Emphasis at all times will be on guidance planning not the plan.

It is relevant that the role of the guidance counsellor should be defined clearly as well as the activities that support that role. As the resources available to the service and the allocation of these resources is paramount to the operation of the guidance service these need to be identified. The guidance counsellor identified and

- recorded the existing resources that are employed in meeting these needs.
- summarised the resources that the school uses for the guidance programme.
- summarised the guidance needs that were currently being met by the service and as such may be possible areas for development and the resources required to meet those unmet needs.

### **Evaluation of the Guidance Service**

In order to provide a comprehensive service the planning group sought the views of the various stakeholders, where possible, with respect to the guidance service being provided at Desmond College.

#### **1. Students**

A questionnaire was constructed and distributed randomly to a broad selection of students.  
**COMPLETED : MAY 2019**

#### **2. Subject Teachers**

A questionnaire was constructed and distributed randomly to a broad selection of teachers. This questionnaire was designed to

- identify the guidance service
- identify the providers of the guidance service
- identify resources available to the service
- Identify recommendations to improve the service

Staff were also interviewed to ask their views on the strengths and challenges for whole school guidance

**COMPLETED : MAY 2019**

#### **3. Parents**

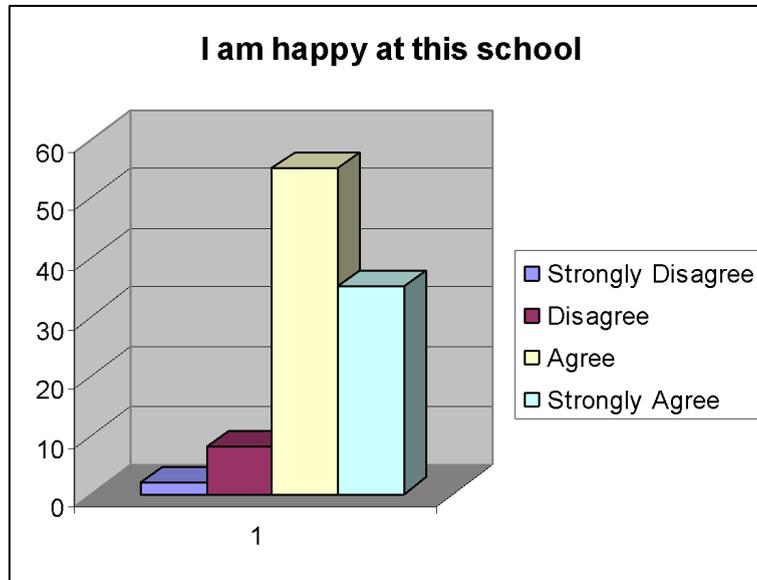
A questionnaire will be disseminated to the Parents (via the parents association) in Autumn 2017. See appendix for questionnaire.

**PLANNED : AUTUMN 2019**

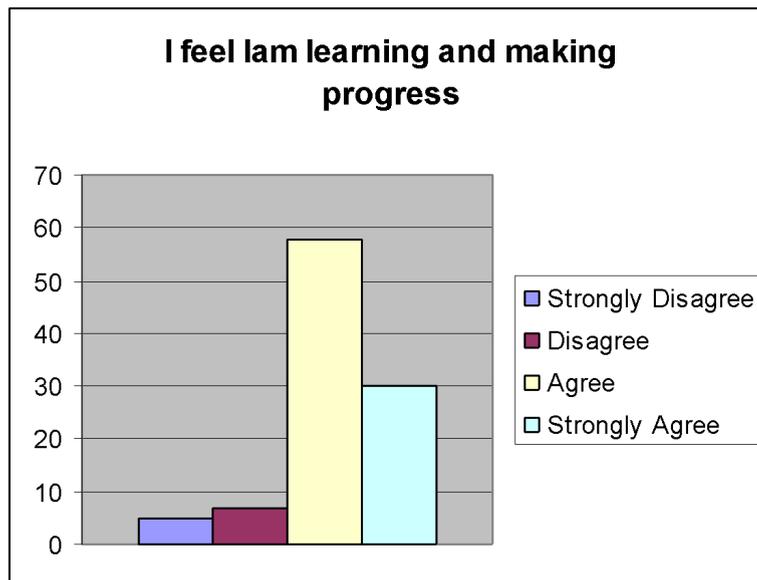
### **RESULTS OF EVALUATION OF CURRENT GUIDANCE PROGRAMME**

The following is an evaluation of the current guidance service where guidance is meeting the needs of the students and where elements of the service need adjustment.

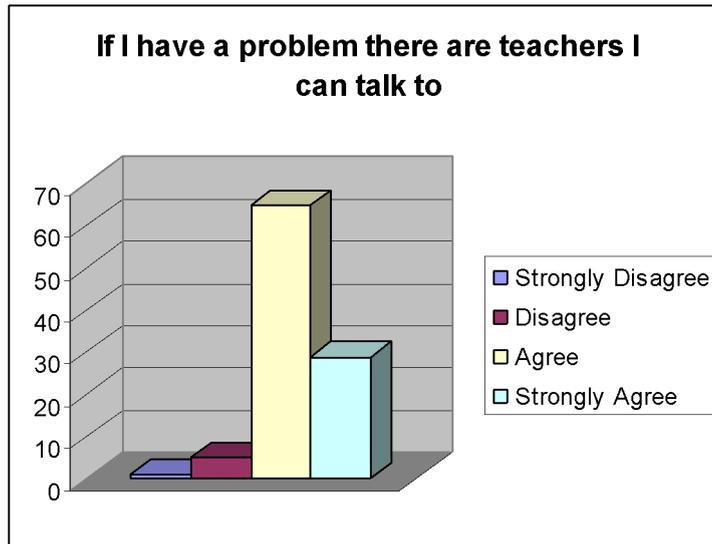
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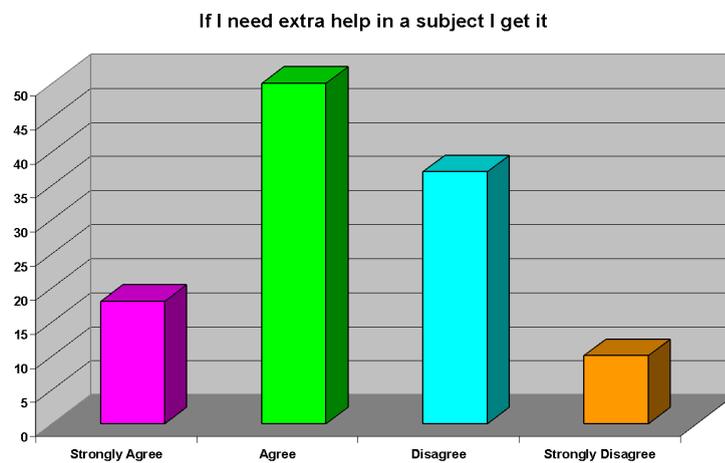
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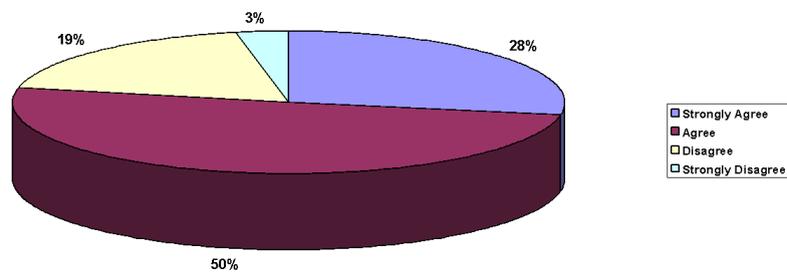


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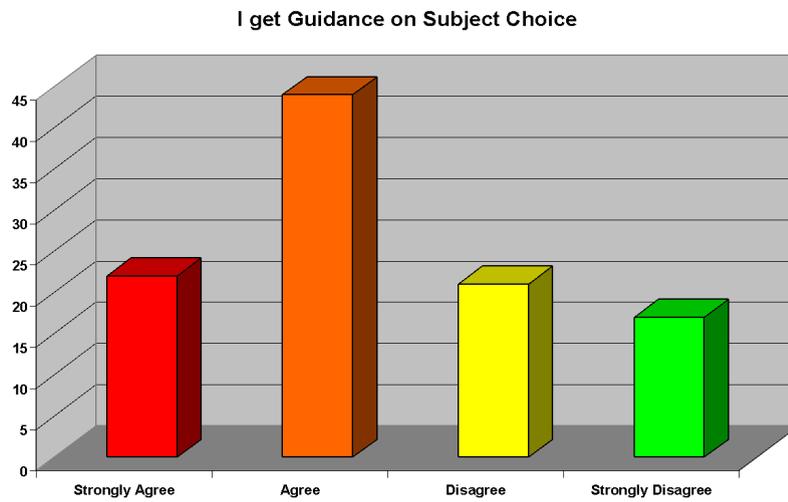


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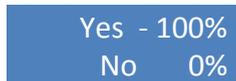
There are a broad range of subjects to choose from



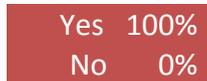
6.



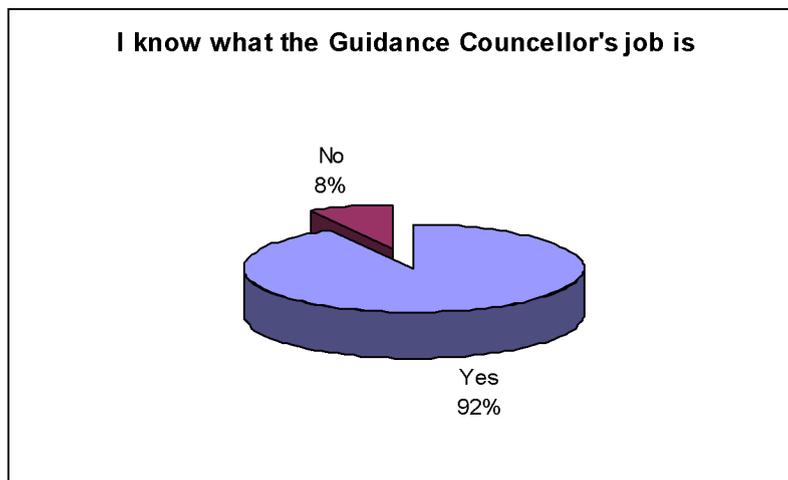
7. I know who the Guidance Counsellor is in Desmond College



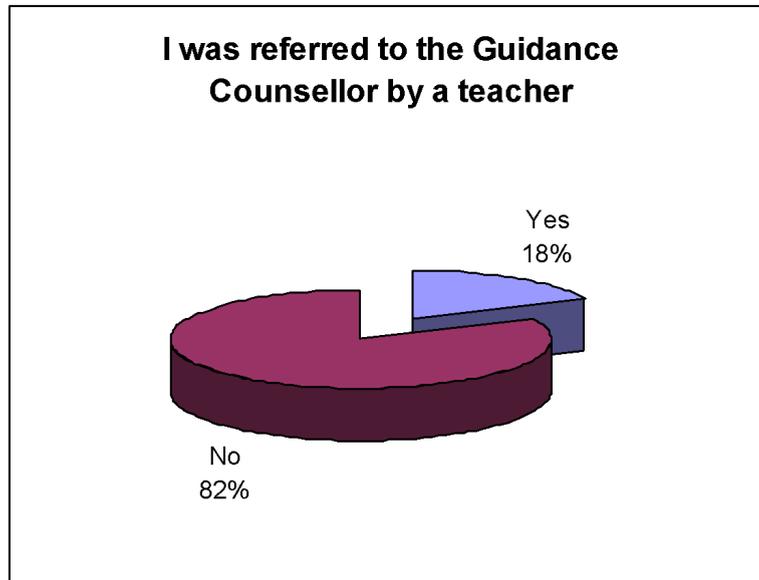
8. I know where the Guidance Counsellors office is in Desmond College



9.

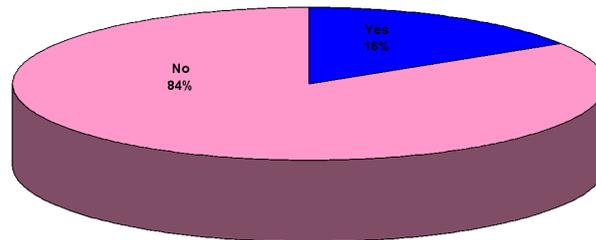


10.

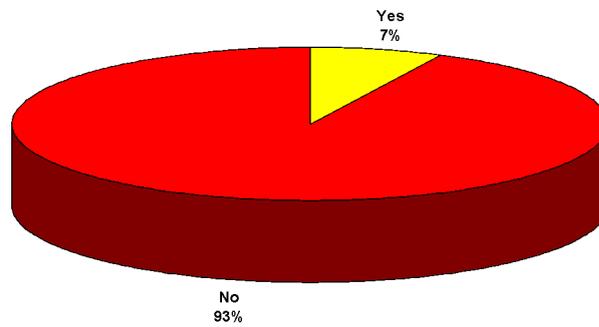


11.

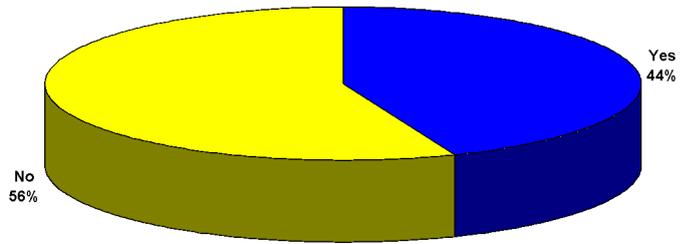
I was referred to the Guidance Counsellor by a teacher



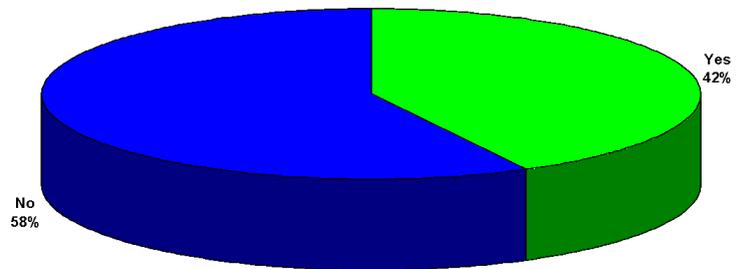
I was asked by my parents to see the Guidance Counsellor



I went to Guidance Counsellor to discuss Career Information

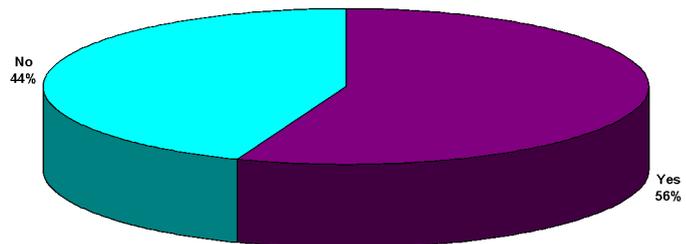


I never went to the guidance counsellor

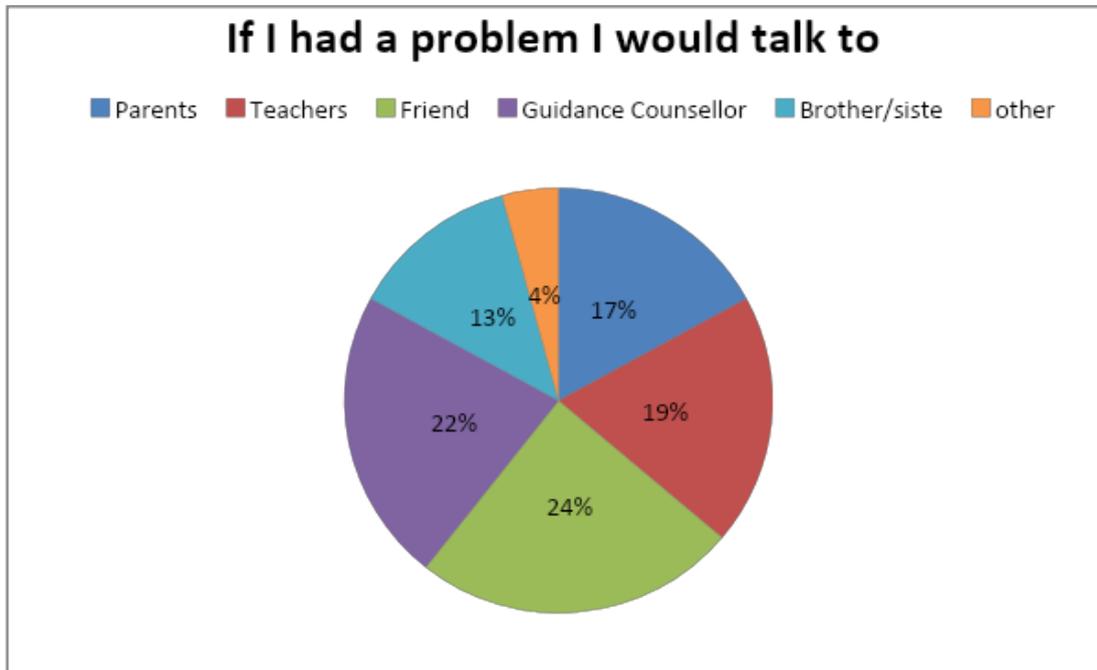


12.

Are there other Teachers you can go to for Guidance?



13.



14.

#### What does a Guidance Counsellor do?

##### Junior pupils

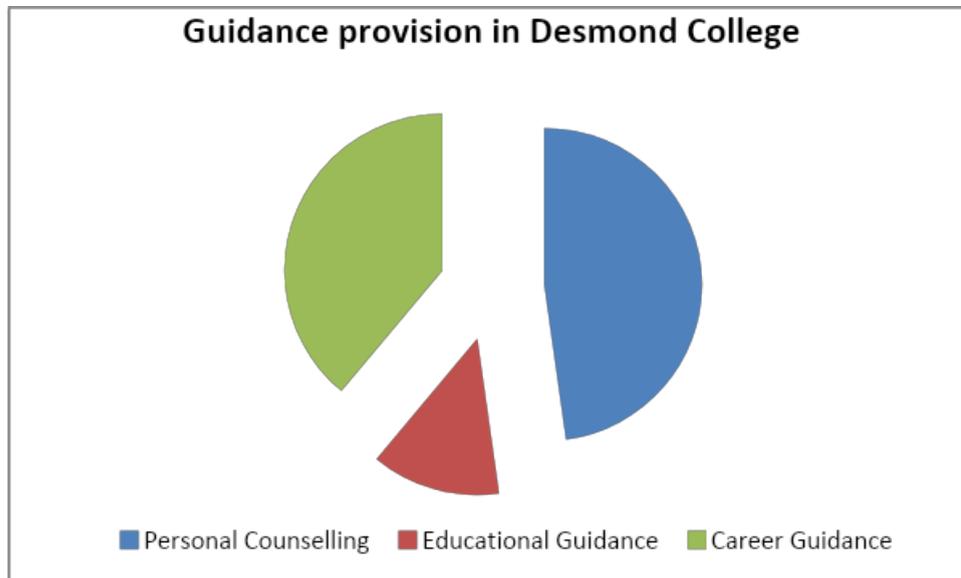
- Guides people
- Helps people with problems
- Someone to talk to
- Study skills
- Helps you choose you subjects for LC
- Does tests
- Helps you through the tough times

##### Senior Pupils

- Pick college course and careers
- Study plans and skills
- There if you need to talk
- Help people
- Gives advice – all kinds
- Teaches guidance
- Brings to careers days and open days

**Staff Evaluation of Career Guidance Service in Desmond College**

1.



Appropriate	90
Inappropriate	10

2. Levels of Guidance Appropriate

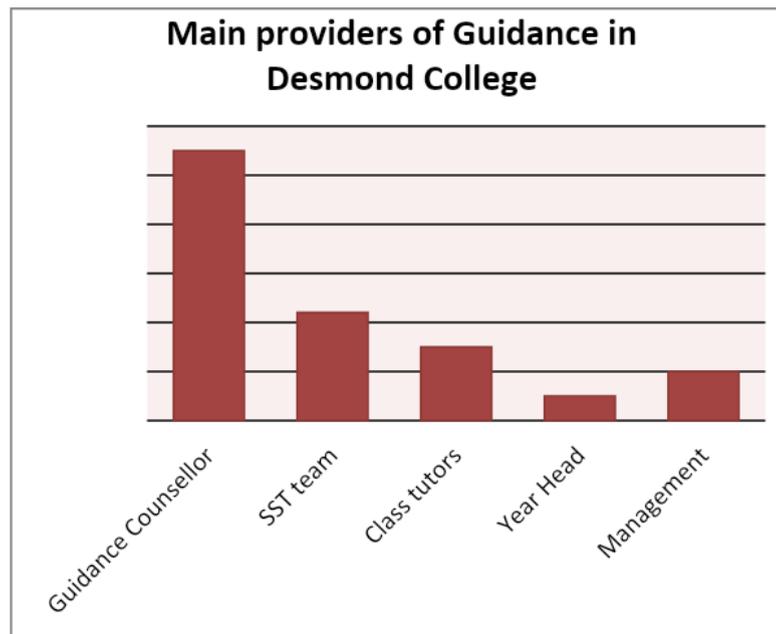
3. Needs of Student being met under current provision

Yes	78
No	22

4. In your opinion how can the guidance service be improved?

- More guidance personnel required
- More focus on future careers required
- More study skills – throughout the school.

5.



6. Is the provision of Guidance seen as the sole responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor

Yes	15
No	85

7. What influences the provision of guidance in Desmond College

- Time
- Timetabling
- Teachers co-operation
- Management co-operation

8. How can the school expand the guidance service around the school

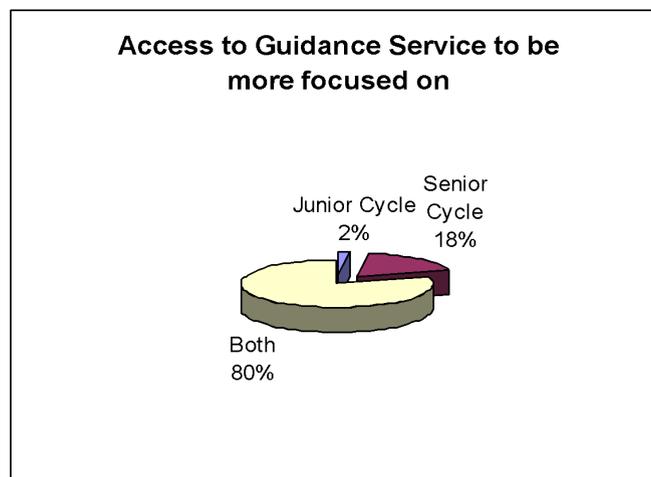
- More information at staff meeting
- Make Student support team more prominent
- Study skills in every subject
- “Careers that can come from each subject area” information

- Class tutors and year head can take some responsibility for lower level pastoral care

9. Access to guidance programmes in Desmond college

- Guidance Classes
- LCVP Classes
- SST
- Class Tutor and Year Heads
- Study Skills
- Anti-Bullying week
- SPHE lessons
- RE lessons

10.



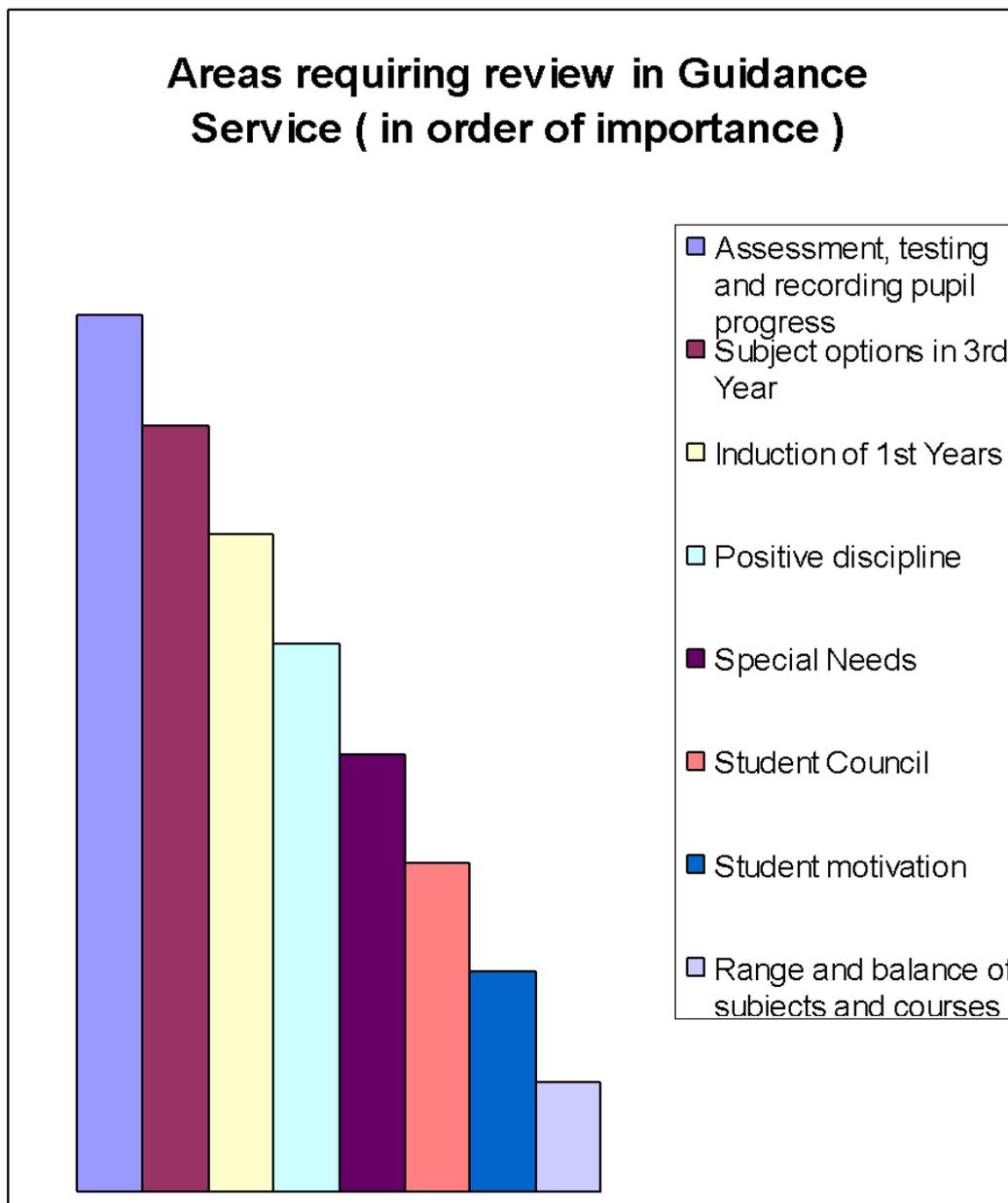
11. Resources available for provision of guidance in Desmond College

Careers office  
 Noticeboards  
 Computer Room  
 Time of guidance Counsellor  
 Signs around school  
 Section in library

12. How can school improve level of guidance offered in Desmond College

- Retain guidance hours if possible
- Create a library for guidance
- Opportunity for pupils to access careers information at lunchtimes
- Make SST more obvious to pupils

13.



**STAFF FINDINGS:**

<b><u>Strengths</u></b>	<b><u>Challenges</u></b>
Qualified Guidance Counsellor	Ratio of time to demands
Open Door Policy	Limited time for Administration
High Commitment Levels	Economic climate
New Ideas & Initiatives	Teacher expectations – “fix all”
Quick Response	May be Isolated – need to work as part of wider team – integrated system with integrated policies
Confidential	Work in team to share educational issues
Good will of Management & staff	International students need special support – false perception of ability
Approachable	Need to promote department more
Strong Interpersonal Skills	Information on tracking interviews
Structure & Resources	
Appointments system – seen quickly	
SST	
School management very supportive	
Appointment system works well	
<b><u>Opportunities</u></b>	<b><u>Internal &amp; External Threats</u></b>
Communicate guidelines to teachers – deal issues may arise	Lack of resources
Promote service at Class tutor periods	Budget cuts
Development of Guidance Team	Critical incident / crisis management – train staff members in listening & non-judgemental skills
Role of GC covers areas others could do e.g. parents, past pupils, etc	Confidential information sought
Promote department in conjunction with parents at information evenings etc	Instant referrals sought
Use of SST more	“magic wand” results
	Conflict of interests
	Personal challenges

**Targets for the Guidance Service for Academic Year 2017/2018**

**DEvised : September 2019**

<b>Personal Guidance</b>	<b>Resources to meet these needs</b>	<b>Progress</b>
1) Follow-up information from outside agencies	Liaise with outside agencies to receive information on pupils that are leaving their care (thus back to our care)	Co-operation from outside agencies may be outside our control. Parents co-operation will be essential
2) SST – members need to be more widely known	Notice in staff room Page with information in staff handbook	Completed
3) Use of SST, care team and tutor system more	Pass across pupils that may be helped by other members of staff.	In progress
4) Exposure of the Guidance Counsellor to all new pupils early in the school year (including transfers)	Meet all new pupils – by class and individually by October break	In progress
<b>Educational Guidance</b>	<b>Resources to meet these needs</b>	
Special Needs pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Guidance Counsellor to liaise full with Learning Support teachers to fully cater for all pupils</li> <li>● Awareness / Identification</li> </ul>	GC to attend SEN meetings. SEN co-ordinator and GC to meet on a weekly basis GC to get copy of SEN pupils – use of shared google drive
Study Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Run study skills Week in September and Feb</li> <li>● Bring a company in for one of these weeks</li> <li>● Teachers to cover study skills relevant for their subject</li> </ul>	Study Skills week to be held start Nov  Decided not to bring a company in for study skills (recessional times). SPHE dept to become more involved

		Wellbeing time may also be used in 2017
<b>Career Guidance</b>	<b>Resources to meet these needs</b>	
Sourcing Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some pupils go straight to employment – guidance must be put in place to allow them the skills necessary to finding work</li> </ul>	<p>Work experience education to LCA and TY</p> <p>Guidance and LCVP Classes to teach interview skills, CV writing, application form instruction.</p> <p>We are providing the skills required</p>
PLC open day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring interested pupils to the PLC open day in Jan (LCFE)</li> <li>Earlier application for these courses to take pressure off the pupils near exam time</li> </ul>	Pending
Higher Options conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring group to Dublin to the higher Options conference – aim to increase motivation, their personal expectations and awareness</li> </ul>	Successful trip and preparation
Guidance Folders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All pupils to have folders for class – all information given can be kept together and used over the year.</li> </ul>	Pupils instructed to come to individual appointments with folders. Come prepared
Careers for different Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each subject should display information in classrooms about career-paths that may stem from that subject</li> </ul>	TY project

Individual appointments for LC students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All 6th year students to be seen for individual appointments by end of October</li> </ul>	In progress
COLLEGE AWARENESS WEEK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Involved all members of the school community</li> <li>● TY project</li> <li>● Guest speakers in each subject area</li> <li>● Contact local HEI's to display during the week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Date in school calander</li> <li>● Promotion amongst staff</li> </ul>

## CURRENT GUIDANCE PROGRAMME BY YEAR GROUP

### 1<sup>st</sup> Year

Changing from the relatively secure environment of Primary School to the many unfamiliarity's of Secondary School is a daunting task to many young students. The Guidance Counsellor helps to ensure that this transition goes as smoothly as possible.

#### ***Main aims of the First Year Programme are:***

1. Appropriate assessment prior to entry and ongoing assessment afterwards.
2. Assist students in their subject choice for option subjects.
3. Help students to adjust to their new school
4. Introduce students to the school Guidance Counselling Service
5. Offer and provide counselling services.
6. Build up a profile of each student
7. Identify any student thought to be "at risk" or who may have particular needs.
8. Offer and provide a referral service.
9. Foster the growth of self-esteem and confidence.
10. Give clear information about the School Guidance Counselling Service to First Year parents.
11. Liaise with Pastoral Care Teachers in the implementation of the S.P.H.E. "Lifeskills" Programme to include the foundations for good study habits and homework organisation.
12. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the First Year Programme.
13. Study skills

#### ***Implementation of the above aims:***

- Liaise with Primary School teachers and assist in an Information Session for prospective parents before incoming First Year students enter Desmond College.
- Welcome new students to the school on their first day in August.
- Liaise with the First Year class teachers and Year Head to ensure that each pupil is made feel that he/she belongs in the school community. Ensure that students know the location of the Guidance Counsellor's Office and that the service is available to *all* pupils, whether self-referred or referred by others.
- Develop greater social and personal understanding and competency by means of both formal and informal group activities during the school year. This may facilitate those with personal and social difficulties to approach the Guidance and Counselling Service.
- Build up a personal record / file for each student.
- Assess each student's numerical and verbal ability using standardised tests e.g. DRT Numerical and Verbal Reasoning tests and put results on file.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.

**External**

- Parent/Guardian information session on helping their child to study.
- Subject Option information session for Parents/Guardians

## **2nd year**

The objective of the Second Year programme is to help students develop their vocational, personal and educational self-concept.

***Main aims of the Second Year Programme are:***

1. Continue to develop the relationship established in First Year.
2. Help students develop a positive self image.
3. Help students set goals and targets both personally and academically.
4. Reinforce the study skills programme with Tutors started in First Year.
5. Available to all who come for individual counselling – whether self-referred or referred by others.
6. Introduction to university through Broader Horizons
7. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Second Year programme.

***Implementation of the above aims:***

- Liaise with Pastoral Care tutors in the implementation of “Lifeskills” S.P.H.E. Programme.
- Continue to add further personal details, achievements, examination results to each student’s personal record.
- Ongoing liaison with parents, fellow staff members and Learning Support Department.
- Organise study skills workshops with Second Year groups.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.
- TRACKING

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Year**

Ensure that the Guidance Counsellor is available to each student on an individual basis. The emphasis is on helping students to prepare effectively for the state examinations. Assist students in identifying their career preferences, and the implications of this for subject choice for the Senior Cycle.

### ***Main aims of the Third Year Programme are:***

1. Provide information and guidance on subject choice - Master Chart of essential subjects.
2. Assisting with the “Lifeskills” S.P.H.E. Programme, with particular emphasis on decision-making and realistic self-evaluation.
3. Identify potential early school leavers and help them in decision making with regards job opportunities or vocational training.
4. Assist students in the development of effective study habits, and examination techniques by delivering workshops on study skills.
5. Administer the DATS aptitude test and provide each student and parent a written report on an individual basis.
6. Introduce 3<sup>rd</sup> years to Careersportal website and conduct interest test.
7. Introduce Qualifax.
8. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Third Year programme.

### ***Implementation of the above aims:***

- Liaise with Pastoral Care tutors in discussing:
  - Study timetables
  - Time management
  - Forward planning and good organisation
  - Options after the Junior Certificate
- Administer both the Differential Aptitude Tests and Interests Test in December of Third Year. Interpret and discuss the results with each student on an individual basis. Parents invited to attend this interview. The Careers Portal Interest Test will also be used.
- Continue to update student's personal records.
- Continue to liaise with pastoral care tutors, subject teachers, year heads, learning support teachers and parents.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.

### **External**

- Study skills seminar – exam focus/revision planning/time management
- Students are encouraged to attend career talks / presentations / seminars / open days.....

## **Transition Year Programme**

Through a variety of learning experiences, the Transition Year programme facilitates the integrated development of the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and vocational aptitudes and abilities of each individual student. The Transition Year class also have one Guidance class per week.

### ***Main aims of the Transition Year Programme are:***

1. Assist students to development a sound knowledge of self.
2. Help students to discover and develop their own individual talents, aptitudes and abilities with regard to future educational and vocational participation.
3. Help students appreciate the importance of a healthy, balanced lifestyle and to encourage the development of leisure activities.
4. Assist them in their pursuit of work experience.
5. Involve parents, who can contribute time and expertise to the Transition Year Programme.
6. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Transition Year programme.

### ***Implementation of the above aims:***

- Administer Interest Inventories such as Careers Portal and CII. Students may discuss the implications of these results to career choice.
- Research and present to class “Careers stemming from different subjects”
- Instruct students in the use of Qualifax.ie and careersportal.ie as an aid for research in course choice.
- Career investigation
- Careers fair for senior students
- Preparation for Work experience
- Completion of CV, letter of application
- Interview techniques
- Be available for individual counselling as required.
- Update personal records including Junior Certificate results; participation in work experience programmes; results of interest inventories.

### **External**

- Students are encouraged to attend career talks / presentations / seminars / open days.....
- Exploring technology – on site tip to UL
- On-campus trip to UL and Mary Immaculate College

## **5th Year Programme**

The major thrust of the Fifth Year Programme is to assist students in relation to the transition to Senior Cycle and to develop all aspects of the student's personality. The Career guidance element of 5<sup>th</sup> year will be disseminated through LCVP classes.

### ***Main aims of the Fifth Year programme are:***

1. Help students develop and accurately define their occupational self-concept clarifying their interests, abilities and goals.
2. Continue developing effective social skills with students in individual or group work.
3. Stress the importance of relaxation and leisure activities.
4. Provide detailed information on careers and third-level education.
5. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the LC1 Programme.

### ***Implementation of the above aims:***

- Students may discuss the implications on to career choice.
- Reinforce the importance of good study habits, time management, forward planning in individual \ group work through study skills
- Encourage students to attend Third Level College Open Days e.g.UCD, and visit colleges such as UL, ITT, MIC, LIT and PLC'S, in line with Policy on Open Days.
- Individual counselling on request.
- Provide opportunity for individual interview to discuss career options, subject levels and the implications thereof, etc.
- Continue the work of earlier years in the context of the students growing awareness of personal freedom and responsibility, values, life-style options etc.
- Introduce students to computer software which assists matching interests, aptitudes with career and course requirements such as Qualifax, Careers portal, Career Directions.
- Continue to liaise with Pastoral Care Tutors, Subject Teachers, Year Heads, Learning Support Teachers and Parents.
- Study Skills Week
- Career investigation in LCVP
- Curriculum vitae in LCVP.
- Facilitate, in conjunction with the LCVP teachers, the organisation of mock interviews. Teachers will assist in preparing students for mock interviews encourage relevant group work.

### **External**

- Study skills
- Students are encouraged to attend career talks / presentations / seminars / open days.....
- LCVP work experience

## **6th Year Programme**

The thrust of the Sixth Year Programme is to ensure that students have all the necessary information to make informed decisions re: choices on CAO college entry applications \ PLC applications \ Further Training \ Apprenticeships etc. and to ensure that they are prepared for the transition to the world of college or work.

### ***Main aims of Sixth Year Programme are:***

1. Consolidate all previous work done on study skills, learning, memory, revision and exam techniques.
2. Outline the implications of part-time work during this exam year.
3. Facilitate the transition from school to work or Third Level Education.
4. Provide detailed vocational information.
5. Help students make correct choices regarding College courses.
6. Stress the importance of healthy balance between study, relaxation and leisure activities.
7. Reinforce the importance of study habits and effective time management.
8. Introduce information on Costs and grants for 3<sup>rd</sup> level.
9. On-going evaluation and re-planning of the LC2 Programme.

### ***Implementation of the above aims***

- Study Skills classes for target setting early in the first term of 6<sup>th</sup> year. Study Skills weeks in Autumn and Spring. Small study skills workshops where necessary throughout the year
- Provide opportunities for an individual interview for each student along with their parents \ guardians if requested to discuss aptitudes, interest, abilities, to assess past achievements and future goals.
- Cover topics such as CAO, UCAS, Finance, Grants, PLC courses and Apprenticeships in guidance class.
- Dissemination of HEAR/DARE information
- Encourage each student to use Qualifax, Careersportal and Career Directions online at home.
- Arrange a Parents Evening during which information will be provided on the following topics:
  - The Points system.
  - Applying to Third Level Colleges in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Britain.
  - Applying to the Institutes of Technology and introduce the Ladder System (NFQ).
  - Other training options e.g. FÁS, Fáilte Ireland, PLC's, nursing, secretarial courses etc.
  - Use of Computers in Guidance.
  - DARE and HEAR
- Develop information research skills, including the use of the Careers Library and Information Technology. Familiarise students with Qualifax, Careers Portal and Career Directions.
- Available for individual counselling as requested.
- Administer interest tests as necessary to meet student's requirements.

- Update the personal record of each student
- Evaluate the programme with the students and adapt to improve.
- Continue to liaise with Pastoral Care Tutors, Subject Teachers, Year Heads, Learning Support Teachers and Parents.

#### **External**

- Study skills seminar
- Students are encouraged to attend career talks / presentations / seminars / open days.....
- Higher Options conference
- UL and Mary Immaculate and LIT open days
- ITT open day
- Guest speakers from local Universities, IT's, PLC's
- Financial information – guest speaker from West Limerick Resources
- Gardai guest speaker
- DARE/HEAR guest speaker from UL

## **RESOURCES EMPLOYED**

### **Notice Boards**

A notice board has an important role to play in the dissemination of information. It is positioned in a strategic position, close to the student entrance, outside the Guidance office and Careers Library. The notice board is updated regularly.

Notice boards throughout the school are used to pass information regarding career, educational and personal guidance.

### **Careers and IT Library**

Well-resourced and stocked careers library which is accessible at all times by students is available. The library has also a number of internet accessible computers for student use. The Guidance Counsellor ensures that all students within the school are aware of its existence and encouraged and given the opportunity to use the Careers Library and Computers.

### **Computer Software**

Up-to-date, relevant information is easily accessible to the Guidance Counsellor through the internet and guidance software such as Qualifax, Careers Portal and Career Directions. Students are also becoming increasingly competent in the use of computers.

Students are encouraged to research these websites during their spare time.

### **External agencies**

Newcastlewest chamber of Commerce

SOLAS office

University of Limerick

Other Universities, Colleges of Further Education, Institutes of Technology etc – guest speakers

Access Office from University of Limerick

Bank of Ireland Representatives and Credit Union Manager for Career interviews

West Limerick Resources

## **POLICIES**

A number of policies underlie the provision of the guidance service and following an audit on both policies and procedure the following are ratified:

- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Child protection
- Crisis Management / Response
- Non-nationals / Interculturism
- Student Behaviour
- Suspension & Expulsion
- Internet Usage
- Extra Curricular
- Career Guidance
- Counselling
- Substance Abuse - in need of review
- Bereavement – in need of review
- Disabilities – in need of review
- Special needs – work-in-progress
- Referral procedures?

# APPENDICES

## Staff Questionnaire on views of Guidance and the Guidance Service in Desmond College.

*Guidance refers to the process of facilitating individuals or groups to develop their capacity for the self-management of their personal, social, educational, training, occupational and life choices in order to grow towards their potential and thereby to contribute to the development of a better society.*

1. What guidance do you see is being provided in Desmond College?

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2. Is the level of guidance provided appropriate in your opinion?

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3. Are the needs of students being met under the current provision of guidance in Desmond College?

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4. In your opinion how can the guidance service be improved?

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5. Who are the main providers of guidance in Desmond College?

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6. Is the provision of guidance seen by the school as the sole responsibility of the Guidance Counsellor?

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7. What, in your opinion, influences the provision of guidance in Desmond College?

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8. How, in your opinion, can Desmond College broaden the concept of guidance beyond the remit of the guidance counsellor?

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9. What access to guidance programmes have students in Desmond College?

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10. Do you feel access to guidance service is more focused on

Junior Cycle	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
	s			
Senior Cycle	Yes		No	
	s	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Both	Yes		No	
	s	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

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11. What resources are available, in your opinion, for the provision of guidance?

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12. How can the school improve the guidance service offered to our students?

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Please indicate by ticking in the appropriate column the five areas of school guidance that in your opinion would benefit from specific review and development. (1 = top priority, 5 = least priority).

Areas Of School Guidance	Choose 5
Assessment, testing and recording of pupils' progress	
Calendar for organisation of college open - days	
Careers information night – 6 <sup>th</sup> years	
Induction of 1 <sup>st</sup> years	

Information night for parents of incoming 1 <sup>st</sup> year students	
Links with business	
Links with community	
Links with parents	
Links with primary schools	
Meetings of school pastoral care team	
Methods of grouping pupils	
Organisation of extra curricular activities – school calendar	
Pastoral care system	
Planning and co-ordination of student support services	
Positive discipline	
Provision for extra-curricular activities	
Provision for learning needs of all pupils	
Range and balance of subjects and courses	
Special needs	
Student Council	
Student information - collection and communication	
Student motivation	
Subject information night - senior cycle	
Subject options structure	
Subject options structure in junior cycle	
Other?	
Please add a category if you wish to prioritise an area not on the list	

**Student Questionnaire on their perception of Guidance and the Guidance Service in Desmond College.**

Please rate the following statements on a scale 1 to 4 by circling the appropriate number.

4 = Strongly Agree      3 = Agree      2 = Disagree      1 = Strongly Disagree

1. I am happy at this school	1	2	3	4
2. I feel I am learning and making progress	1	2	3	4
3. If I have a problem there are teachers I can talk to	1	2	3	4
4. If I need extra help in a subject I get it	1	2	3	4
5. There are a broad range of subjects to choose from	1	2	3	4
6. I get guidance on subject choice	1	2	3	4
Tick <b>Yes or No</b> to the following Questions				
7. I know who the Guidance Counsellor is	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I know where the Guidance Counsellor's office is	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I know what the Guidance Counsellor's job is	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I was referred to the Guidance Counsellor by a teacher	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I went to the guidance counsellor				
to discuss career information	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
to discuss a personal issue	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was sent by a teacher	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was asked by my parents to see the guidance Counsellor	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
I never went to the guidance counsellor	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are there other teachers you can go to for guidance?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. If I had a problem (personal or educational) I would discuss it with				

Parents	Ye s	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers	Ye s	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend	Ye s	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance Counsellor	Ye s	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brother / Sister	Ye s	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other				

14. What does a Guidance Counsellor do?

**Parents Questionnaire on views of Guidance and Guidance Service in Desmond College.**

*Guidance refers to the process of facilitating individuals or groups to develop their capacity for the self-management of their personal, social, educational, training, occupational and life choices in order to grow towards their potential and thereby to contribute to the development of a better society.*

1. What guidance do you see is being provided at Desmond College?

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2. Who in your opinion provides the guidance service at Desmond College?

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3. What is your opinion is the role of a Guidance Counsellor?

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4. Have you or your child availed of the guidance service at Desmond College?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5. Each 6<sup>th</sup> year student had 1-to-1 individual appointment with a Guidance Counsellor as many times as requested as well as a Careers class each year. Were you aware of this service?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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6. Each 3<sup>rd</sup> year student had a 1-to-1 individual appointment with a Guidance Counsellor where DAT's results were discussed along with subject choice and career aspirations. Were you aware of this service?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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