

Whole-School Career Guidance Plan

St. Vincent's Secondary School 23/24

St Vincent's Mission Statement

"It is our mission at St. Vincent's Glasnevin to provide the students in our care with a comprehensive and rounded education in the Catholic Christian tradition of Edmund Rice.

We strive in partnership with Parents and Guardians to ensure that each student develops to his full potential.

We work to provide each student with a firm foundation from which he can apply, both for his benefits and that of the wider community, the skills, knowledge and values he has developed in St. Vincent's".



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Section 1 - Organisation

1.1 - Career Guidance Department Aims

Guidance is a right and is enshrined in the Legislation: Section (9) of the Education Act (1998), Subsection (c), states that schools must “ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices”.

Guidance is an ongoing process involving a wide range of learning activities such as information giving and counselling. They are offered in a developmental sequence appropriate to the age and the needs of the student. The guidance process helps a student to develop and accept a full personal, social, educational and career awareness of his/her personal talents and abilities and, in this way, it helps people to grow in independence and to make well-informed decisions about their lives.

In the wider context significant changes are taking place in the economic and social structures in Ireland which have important implications for the education system and for all the students who are its principal focus. The value of guidance and counselling in responding to the challenges is widely recognised in government policy statements and by other national and international bodies including the National Development Plan 2000, The Commission on the Points System, and the OECD.

Guidance Activities that Support the Achievement of the Aims of the School Guidance Programme

- Consultation with parents, school staff and students (Current, future and past).
- Feedback – giving feedback to school management and staff on the needs of individual students, year groups and the school as an organisation, and how the School Guidance Programme has supported student choices and transitions.
- Networking – establishing links with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance guidance work with students.
- Promoting change – assisting curricular development in school.
- Placement – work experience, work shadowing and preparing students for employment.
- Subject Choice Week and Parent Info nights for TY and Third years.
- Follow up – following up former students regarding progression routes and destinations.
- Guidance of change of levels in Senior Cycle
- 6th Year Parent Night regarding progression routes
- Continuous Professional Development
- Membership of the IGC
- Participation in Professional Supervision

1.2 - Guidance in the DEIS Context

St Vincent's is a designated DEIS school and, in-line with whole school policies, the Guidance Department adheres to the Planning structures outlined by the DEIS Scheme. The Guidance Department in St Vincent's engages with the DEIS initiative across all 8 strands of the scheme.

DEIS Initiative 1: Retention

From the initial application, the GCD is involved in the Transition of Students from Primary to Secondary Education through direct interventions. Similarly, direct interventions are in place to assist students in each year and aid transition from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle and from Senior Cycle to Higher Education / Further Training / World of Work. Individual and Group Career Guidance and Counselling is available to promote each student's educational, social and emotional development. As an integral part of the school's Whole School Approach to Student Support and Wellbeing the GCD plays an active role in identifying and facilitating students who are 'at risk'. A network of contacts is created to assist the development of students and referrals to external agencies are conducted on a needs be basis.

DEIS Initiative 2: Attendance

Close work with the Home School Liaison Person, Management, Attendance Officer, Behaviour for Learning Teacher, Form Teachers, Class Teachers and the SCP staff help to identify attendance

patterns and targeted interventions are put in place via individual/group counselling. Care Team meetings are attended once a week for support staff in which attendance targets are closely monitored by the Guidance Counsellor.

DEIS Initiative 3: Literacy

The Guidance Counselling Department works with the members of the School Self-Evaluation & DEIS Committee and the Learning Support staff to review the Literacy Levels of all students prior, and during, their school life in St Vincent's. Guidance Counselling staff are fully qualified to administer psychometric and Literacy/Numeracy Tests. Annually the GC will use results in order to track student progress and identify target students for interventions. The use of Noticeboards, information displays, website, Twitter pages all help to assist the Literacy Programme within the school, with particular focus placed on promoting the language needed for Further Education and the World of Work. Students are assisted in interview prep and linked in with Adult agencies such as NWDP who run interview workshops. Specific Literacy Requirements (CVs, Form Filling and Application Forms) fall under the purview of the Guidance Counselling Department. CAW involves whole school activities that have a specific focus on Literacy.

DEIS Initiative 4: Numeracy

The Guidance Counselling Department works with the members of the School Self-Evaluation & DEIS Committee and the Learning Support staff to test the Numeracy Levels of all students prior, and during, their school life in the school. The Guidance staff are fully qualified to administer psychometric and Literacy/Numeracy Tests. Annually they track student progress and identify target groups. The use of Noticeboards, Information Displays, Websites such as REACH+ & Classroom Guidance, Twitter, Classroom Activities allows the Guidance Counselling Department to highlight the specific Numeracy elements pertinent to the Department (Grades, Points, Financial Requirements (Grants/Access Programmes) and Key Days & Dates. CAW involves whole school activities that have a specific focus on Numeracy.

DEIS Initiative 5: Attainment

The Guidance Counselling Department focuses attention on raising awareness within the student body of the 'impact' (educational, emotional, social and careers) of individual examination attainment through Induction, Junior Cycle Wellbeing, Transition Year Guidance, Senior Guidance, the Vocational Preparation and Guidance module and College Awareness Week. Both group and individual consultations will assist students in their choice of subjects and subject levels in both the Junior and Senior Cycle. The future implications of subject choice, examination level choice etc will be made known to the student body and their parents at information evenings. Reviews of the school's examination performance is of interest to the Guidance Counselling Department, given its

aim of assisting students in their future development. Results are regularly reviewed using Athena and target groups of underachieving students are given extra support. Tracking is done with all senior cycle students using Reach+.

DEIS Initiative 6: Transition

A central pillar of the Guidance Counselling Department's aim is to promote and facilitate students' individual progression (to further education and/or employment). It is also the Guidance Counsellor's role to facilitate students' transitions from primary to secondary school and from junior cycle to senior cycle. In reality, each task of the Guidance Counselling Department is focused on the successful transition progression of the students. Past Pupil Progression Paths are monitored, recorded and analysed. Displays with past pupil progression, as well as past pupil visits/talks are considered important in order to encourage current students to follow their own individual progression path. Career Classes are now available to all senior students as well as individual sessions in 6th Year and as needed in other years. A strong partnership has been established between the GC and outside agencies such as colleges, training centres, apprenticeships and adult employment services to ensure students have ample opportunities to pursue a career pathway after school.

DEIS Initiative 7: Partnership With Parents

The Guidance Counselling Department seeks to engage parents in its work to help facilitate the best outcomes for the students. Contact with home is encouraged and facilitated regularly and whenever necessary (with due care given to the confidentiality that underpins the GC service). Parents' Evenings are run to encourage an open dialogue between the school and home and to facilitate the dissemination of important information such as CAO, SUSI, HEAR/DARE, Subject Choice etc. PTMs, Parent Induction, Coffee Mornings and Parents Evenings are a key element of the Service Provision. The Guidance Counsellor collaborates with the Home School Liaison Person regularly to include parents in the support of the students. Parents are contacted regarding referrals to outside agencies and in the continuum of support for their children. Parents are surveyed regularly about Wholeschool guidance in an effort to improve their involvement and knowledge.

DEIS Initiative 8: Partnership With Others

The Guidance Counselling Department is collaborative and works with all internal groups to ensure the whole school approach to student support. Similarly, External Agencies, such as Higher Education Institutions, Further Training Institutes, Businesses, Psychological Support Services, Adult Career Guidance Services and Educational Tuition Institutions are engaged and collaborated with based on the individual needs of students. Close ties are forged with external partners to ensure the best Guidance Counselling service possible for the student body. The Guidance Counsellor regularly

attends CPD in the labour market, apprenticeships, educational opportunities and mental health. These events provide the GC with information on current vocational affairs and allows the GC to network with important agencies. The GC is a member of national and local networks such as the IGC, ERST Guidance Counsellor Network, DCU Access, NWDP network. The Guidance Counsellor attends Open Night to help support and encourage parents of incoming students.

1.3 - Wholeschool Guidance Roles & Responsibilities

The guidance service at St Vincent's is collaborative and the Dept. works in conjunction with, and is supported, by:

DEIS/SSE school planning

Student Support Team (Care Team)

Whole School Guidance Committee

Management team

Administrative Staff

Learning Support Staff

LCA Coordinator

TY Coordinator

Wellbeing Coordinator

BFL Teacher

Staff Members, Form Teachers, Year Heads

Parents, HSCL and the School Completion Officer.

Whole School Guidance Committee

The Whole School Guidance Committee was established in 2021 as advised by the NCGE. All members of staff were welcome to apply and all applicants were successful. The current members of the committee are:

Sinitta Flood - Guidance Counsellor

Neil McCann - Vice Principal/Guidance Counsellor

Ciara Redmond - Science & Maths Teacher/ Senior Tutor

Paul Walsh - English & History Teacher/ Junior Year Head

Seamus O'Sullivan - Science & PE teacher/ Junior Tutor

Alanna Galvin - Art Teacher

The committee aims to meet once a term and meetings were held on the following dates in 23/24 (see appendix i):

The committee has been focusing on the initiatives set out in the Whole School Guidance 3 year plan: 2020 - 2023 and review annually.

1.4 - Guidance Allocation & Timetable

Career Guidance Department

St Vincent's has one nominated full-time Guidance Counsellor, Sinitta Flood, with additional hours attended to by the Deputy Principal, Neil McCann. The Guidance Counselling Department within St Vincent's is staffed by fully qualified Guidance Counsellors who are members of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors. Currently the school has three fully qualified Guidance Counsellors on staff who liaise on a daily basis.

For 2023/24 the designated Guidance Counsellors within the school are Ms Sinitta Flood & Mr Neil McCann.

Qualified Guidance Counsellors on Staff:

Name	Maire Quinn	Neil McCann	Sinitta Flood
Qualification	MSc in Guidance Counselling	MSc in Guidance Counselling	MSc in Guidance Counselling
Institution	DCU	DCU	DCU

Year of Graduation	2012	2016	2019
Current Position	Principal	Deputy Principal/GC	Guidance Counsellor

Career Guidance Allocation

The allocation for Career Guidance in St Vincent's Secondary School 2023/24 is 1.6 (35.25 hours).

Career Guidance Timetable

The tables below outline the current timetabled lessons of Career Guidance in the School. These lessons are carried out by both the Guidance Counsellors and other relevant members of staff.

Year/Class Group	58 minute periods	Objective	Staff Member
6th Year Career Guidance Class	1 Period a week per class group	Delivery of the Career Guidance Programme - Senior Cycle	S. Flood (1 class) N. McCann (1 class)
5th Year Career Guidance Class	1 Period a week on a rotation (1 classgroup receives GC from Sep - Dec and the other class group receive from Jan - May)	Delivery of the Career Guidance Programme - Senior Cycle	S. Flood (on a rotation)
6th Year LCA VPG	2 periods per week	Delivery of the Vocational Preparation and Guidance Modules	Guidance Module - S. Flood (6 hours per year) All other modules - J. Lyons
5th Year LCA VPG	2 periods per week	Delivery of the Vocational Preparation and Guidance Modules	Guidance Module - S. Flood (6 hours per year) All other modules - J. Lyons
TY Career Guidance	1 period per week for each class group	Delivery of the Career Guidance Model - Senior Cycle	S. Flood (3 classes)
1st Year Wellbeing/Guidance	1 period a week on a rotation (rotates in 11 week slots 3 times a year).	Delivery of the Wellbeing/Guidance Modules (Rotation)	H. O'Donnell (Induction) S. Flood (Career Guidance) U. Whelan (IT Skills)
2nd Year Wellbeing/Guidance	1 period per week for 6 weeks during English.	Delivery of the Wellbeing/Guidance Modules	S. Lawless P. Walsh

3rd Year Wellbeing/Guidance	2 periods per week for 3 weeks during Term 1 (prior to Mock Exams).	Delivery of the Wellbeing/Guidance Modules	Core Subject Teachers (English, Irish, Maths).
Senior Cycle Tutor Time	8 Class Groups - 12 minutes x 5 times per week.	Delivery of pastoral care with tutors.	Senior Cycle Tutors

Timetabled Meetings/Committees	Time Allocation per week
Care Team	1 hour
Total Timetabled GCD Activities carried out under the GC provision	7 x 58 minute periods 40 x 12 minute periods

Career Guidance Activities (Outside of Timetable)

The remaining Career Guidance allocation is utilised by the Career Guidance Counsellors throughout the academic year for other activities such as:

- Careers interviews with all 6th year students - each 6th year will meet guidance counsellor individually at least twice a year.
- Completion of CAO applications with 6th year students.
- Completion of H.E.A.R. and D.A.R.E. applications with students and parents.
- Induction with 1st year students.
- Interventions for 3rd year students to do interest inventory, introduction to Career websites, work values profile and National Framework of Qualifications to illustrate Leaving Cert options.
- Interventions for Target Groups identified by the Care Team (ALERT, MY FRIENDS YOUTH, WHY TRY).
- One to one interview with 3rd year students on Leaving Cert options and subject choice where required
- Organisation of annual events such as trips to career fairs, CAW, Subject Choice Week, CAO night, Options Night.
- Guidance Module in LCA VPG with both 6th and 5th years equivalent to at least 6 hours per year with each year group.
- Interviews with LCA students on Post Leaving Cert options, making applications etc.
- Ongoing personal / social counselling (for all students) as referred by staff, self-referral or parents.
- Referring and Liaising with External Partners such as CAMHS, NEPS, Pieta House, Daughters of Charity Counselling Service etc.

- Organising open day visits, guest speakers, career/apprenticeship fairs in school.
- Coordinating DCU Unity/Access Programme.
- Organising and conducting mock interviews for LCA students and 6th year students who are attending job and PLC interviews. Liaise on whole school guidance activity with JCSP, HSCL, SCP and SPHE co-ordinators on guidance issues.
- Coordinate local Career/College Fair in Finglas Area.
- Prepare and input on agreed guidance issues at parents' information evenings
- Administration of guidance service (keeping written records and VsWare records)
- Up-dating and maintenance of guidance resources, notice board, promotional activities and website.
- Promotion of the CGD Services within the school by creating a visible presence within the school environment.
- Attend meetings with vulnerable students and parents such as early school leavers, mental health sufferers, additional needs students.
- Provide continued support to students from the Care Team list and carry out appropriate plans with all stakeholders.
- Attend supervision meetings, CPD, local events and group meetings such as DCU Access, Northwest Dublin Partnership meetings, ERST meetings, IGC branch meetings, Third Level College meetings, community training centre meetings etc.
- Co-curricular activities are carried out in both the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle programmes (see section 2.5).
- Attend Guidance Counsellor meetings with External Links.

1.5 Supervision & CPD

The Guidance Counsellor in the school endeavours to attend as much IGC supervision and CPD as possible. As the school's designated Guidance Counsellor, Ms Sinitta Flood attends the IGC supervision.

Supervision Attendance

2023/24:

Venue	Date	Status
Mount Temple	10th Oct	Couldn't attend (Whole Staff CPD in school)
Mount Temple	28th Nov	Pending
Mount Temple	23rd Jan	Pending
Mount Temple	19th Mar	Pending

Mount Temple	14th May	Pending
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CPD Attended

S. Flood 23/24:

Date/Venue	Description	Service Provider
Zoom - 20/09/23	Clarity Coach	ERST
Colaiste Dhulaigh - 19/09/23	My Guidance Platform/ Branch Meeting	IGC
Zoom - 09/10/23	Restorative Practice	Connect RP
Zoom - 11/10/23	Inclusion in Guidance	OIDE
Zoom - 18/10/23	ADHA Parents Programme	Parents Plus

Please see Appendix ii for attendance certificates.

Section 2: Guidance Curricular & Co-Curricular Programmes

2.1 - Wholeschool Guidance Continuum of Support

In St Vincent's we have carefully planned as a school how to incorporate wholeschool guidance on a continuum of support. Our support plan is demonstrated on the diagram below and has been developed using the input of all members of the school community.



2.2 Guidance for All - Curricular and Co-Curricular Programmes

All students in St Vincent’s take part in a Career Guidance Programme. There is a specific Guidance Programme for both Junior Cycle and Leaving Cycle. These programmes provide all students with support for their personal, social, educational and career development. Transitions are also supported particularly the transition from primary to secondary, junior cycle to senior cycle and senior cycle to further education/employment. The Guidance Counsellor is responsible for the organisation of the Career Guidance Programme; however, many other members of staff play a role

in the overall delivery of the Programme. At Junior Cycle, guidance is incorporated into the Wellbeing Programme for 1st years. At Senior Cycle, guidance is incorporated into TY & LCA programmes.

The Whole School Community is involved in the Guidance Programme. External Communities are also used as part of the Whole School Guidance Programme.

See section 3.3 for the detailed list of Whole School Guidance Community Links.

Career Guidance Programme Plan

There are two main Guidance Programmes in St Vincents: Junior Cycle Guidance & Senior Cycle Guidance. Both Guidance Programmes are cross-curricular and are whole school practices. Objectives of the Guidance Programmes are categorised into the three Areas of Learning (Developing Myself, Developing My Learning & Developing My Career Path). Under each Area of Learning there are competencies that students should attain over the course of their second level education. There are eight competencies in total and they are categorised as follows:

Areas of Learning

Competences

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

The Guidance Programme in St Vincent's aims to develop these competencies in ALL students. Both the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Programmes contain a number of learning outcomes for each individual year group which support the development of competencies mentioned. In the 'Units of Learning' section of the plan, the learning outcomes are colour coordinated to reflect the areas of learning. **RED** = Developing Myself, **GREEN** = Developing my Learning, **Purple** = Developing my Career Path

Stages of Learning:

The objectives should be attained over a four-stage continuum of learning (Acquiring Knowledge - Applying Knowledge - Personalising Learning - Acting Out). It is important to note that not all students will progress through all four stages in the same way nor will they progress through in a linear fashion. The continuum of learning is individual and will depend on motivation, environment, prior knowledge and attitudes.



2.3 Junior Cycle Guidance Programme

First Year Units of Learning:

1. My New School & Support System
2. My Future Pathways
3. My Goals

Learning Outcomes

My New School & Support System	My Future Pathways	My Goals
Identify fears and worries about new school	Identify the stages of transition in secondary school	Compare and contrast wishes and goals
Explore supports available in times of transition	Show awareness for the career events happening in school	Compare career goals to interests, qualities and strengths
Know the key support people to go to in the school	Identify different stages in the Irish education system	Identify a goal they have for the future
Identify how each person can help with different problems	Describe the qualities, interests and strengths	Know how to make their goals SMART
Adopt effective strategies to deal with transitions in life	Explore education requirements for career choices	Understand importance of school in achieving goals

Learning Experiences

My New School & Support System	My Future Pathways	My Goals
Listen and respond to a sample experience of starting school	Review and highlight important information in the school calendar	3 Stars and 1 Wish worksheet with pair discussion
Brainstorm typical worries with starting school	Respond to transitional stages in school - Knew, learn, more info.	Class discussion on difference between a wish and a goal
Put a worry in a jar	Write letter to future self focusing on goals and reflecting on their current pathway	Watch video on SMART goals and group discussion about why they are important
Tour the school showing the places and faces where they can find support	Tour the Guidance Area of the school and look at posters of pathways and hall of fame posters.	Listen to anecdotal story about a student's goal and fill in worksheet
Write the names of the support staff in Inclusion Booklet	Walking discussion - set up pods for different pathways with older students (5th years) to discuss what they know about this pathway	Make collage on a wall in school to represent their career goal and pathway.

Assessment

My New School & Support System	My Future Pathways	My Goals
Teacher asks class at the end of lesson and in future lessons to name support people in school and what they can help with	Personal letter should reflect knowledge of the pathways available and the road the student is planning on taking	Wall display will have the classes collective goals - they will show their year head and answer questions for them
In the first year interviews students should demonstrate knowledge of school supports	Wall display will have various different pathways reflecting the career goal	Learning Style Quiz - results will be used in their study skills module

<p>Students should reach out to support people throughout the year or be directed to them by teachers, tutors etc.</p>	<p>Teacher will ask students questions after speaking with older students</p>	<p>Kahoot quiz at the end to reflect and reinforce the learning.</p>
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Resources:

- Powerpoint
- Career Portal
- Worksheets
- Posters
- Learning Style Quiz

Second Year Unit of Learning:

1. PIETA House Resilience Academy

Learning Outcomes

- Enhancing protective factors
- Developing coping skills
- Increasing self-efficacy
- Increase awareness of support
- Encouraging help-seeking behaviour
- Reducing Stigma with mental health

Learning Experiences

- Module 1 - Exploring the meaning of change and how they can respond to it.
- Module 2 - Identifying connections and exploring the different aspects of communication
- Module 3 - Engage in lessons around mental health, perceptions, low mood, sleep patterns and stress.
- Module 3 - What being a resilient person means and how to build resilience.

Assessment

All students will complete the module workbooks and slideshows provided by PIETA House.

Resources

- Powerpoints
- Lesson Plans
- Workbooks
- Posters
- Recorded Videos

Third Year Unit of Learning

1. Study Skills
2. Target Setting
3. Future Planning

Learning Outcomes

Study Skills	Target Setting	Future Planning
Understand and identify learning styles	Familiarise the Forgetting Curve	Understand Senior Cycle Options
Follow the 4 T approach to studying	Set targets for key intervals in the year: October, December, February, JC.	Know Post-Secondary Pathways
Plan topics for each subject and use 5 review system	Use tracking to compare current targets with expected targets	Awareness of the importance of subject choice, work experience, career investigations.
Study using the POKER technique	Compare targets with actual grades at regular intervals	Plan for the future both educationally and vocationally.

Learning Experiences

Study Skills	Target Setting	Future Planning
Create topic list for each subject	View Athena profile	Attend talk on future pathways
Practice ranking and reviewing	Discuss traffic light system with	Class discussion on pros and

system in workbook	teachers	cons of senior options
Use the POKER technique in a variety of subjects	Input target grades with teachers at intervals	Watch videos on school website of past pupils explaining the pathways
Create sample mind maps/flashcards	Use page 16 of journal for class test tracking	Write sample plan for future - 5 year plan.

Assessment

My New School & Support System	My Future Pathways	My Goals
More engagement in supervised study	All students should have complete Athena target setting	Students choosing the most suitable senior options for them (TY, LCE, LCAO)
Study Planner filled with all subject topics for Mocks/JC	Students should write target on cover sheet of all exams	Deeper understanding of link between subject choice/senior option and future career pathway.
Improved JC results	More students in line with expectations	Have a plan for after school in mind.

Resources

- Super Generation Workshops - December Block Classes
- Study Planner - Super Generation
- Study Skills Resource Folder
- Posters
- Powerpoints on Subject Choice, Options, Study Skills
- Videos on Senior Options

2.4 Senior Cycle Guidance Programme

Transition Year Guidance Programme

Objectives:

- To promote general and technical skills in the area of career and vocational research with an emphasis on self-directed learning

- To familiarise students with the Guidance process
- To become familiar with the world of work through the Work Experience Programme
- To inform students about their rights and responsibilities as an employee
- To increase students' awareness of their own abilities, aptitudes and strengths and how this might affect career choices.
- To develop the Students sense of Self-Awareness and self-efficacy, autonomy and confidence
- To encourage career research
- To guide students through the subject choice process.

Activities:

- Individual counselling sessions as needed
- Work Experience programme -2weeks in November and February - Work experience dairy
- Subject choice Week - week long scheduled events such as speed dating, teacher talks, webinars. Followed by subject choice forms - banding etc in collaboration with management using VSWARE tool.
- Transitioning into 5th year established or 5LCA - Options night for Parents/Students - Options form on website in collaboration with management.
- Career investigations - using REACH+ and displaying presentation on their TY website and discussing in the interview (end of year).
- College Exposure: Open Days, Guest Speakers, Higher Options - write report for each one on REACH+
- Careers Exposure: Career Events, guest speakers, work experience, Career Fairs - write a report for each one on REACH+.
- C.V and interview preparation in collaboration with business dept.
- Inclusion on DCU UniTY Programme (Smart Skills, Multimedia and Student Empowerment Modules, STEP UP IN STEM & any other available material)
- Self-Assessments - on REACH+ - Interest profiler, values, personality, aptitudes, career sector profiler - do projects for Website.
- Creation of TY Guidance Portfolio at the end of the year which will be sent home to parents to evaluate and consider pathways for the future - REACH+.

Resources:

- IT Equipment - chromebooks booked for the year.
- Reach+ Subscription for each student
- Googleclassroom
- Guidance Office
- Access to TY websites
- CAW Online Materials
- TY REACH+ Portfolio

- Literacy/Numeracy Results
- Care Team Staff
- Funding for trips
- Human resources - staff for trips, DCU outreach staff, college staff, past pupils.
- Library/IT presentations for Parent/Student options/subject choice talks.
- VSWARE for subject choices and banding.

5th Year Guidance Programme (LCE)

Objectives:

- To assist students in adjusting to the demands of the leaving certificate programme - some may need individual support for this.
- To review subject choice/levels in the aftermath of the Junior Certificate results and with experience of the subject in the first month.
- Future Options - To engage in goal setting and forward thinking ahead of 6th year exploring all options such as HEI, PLC, Apprenticeship, state training, studying abroad, public services etc.
- Study Performance - Assess study performance and improve this through reflection, setting goals, engaging in new techniques, focusing on learning styles and planning study.
- Setting Goals - To track progress by setting goals for each term using various whole-school methods such as exam cover sheets, journals, Athena and REACH+.
- To further the development of personal values, attitudes, decision making and coping skills through REACH+
- To encourage further research into career opportunities by focusing on sectors/interests profilers.
- To provide extensive information on entry requirements for third level education, universities, the UCAS system, I.T's and other institutions.
- To encourage each student to carry out his/her own research into the various options available after leaving certificate besides third level, i.e. PLC, Apprenticeships, SOLAS and doing Career/Course investigations.

Activities:

- Preparation for career Open Days, Guest speakers and Career/College Fairs.
- Careers investigations - exploring different pathways using tools on REACH+ such as Sector Investigation, Career Investigation etc.
- Guidance Topics for Discussion in tutor time for personal, social, educational and vocational support.
- Using Reach+ portfolio to map out future career planning - focusing on lessons around future options, CAO/HEI, PLC/Further Ed, Apprenticeships etc.

- Realistic goal setting - Study Performance Tool, Studying Planning, Target Setting using Reach+, Athena, Journals and Exam Cover Sheets.
- Regular reviewing of targets and performance after Exams with GC, class teachers and tutors.
- Attendance at 5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting.
- Generate end of term Career Profile which will be sent home to parents to encourage conversations and thoughts/planning for 6th year.
- LCA Programme provides Guidance through the VPG programme which covers several topics such as: Preparation for career, Filling out application forms, Letter writing skills, Preparation for Curriculum Vitae, Preparation for Interviews, Work Experience, Answering a newspaper advertisement, Researching a career, Apprenticeship Application Forms.
- Continued support through DCU Access - Ufirst programme.

Resources:

- IT Equipment - chromebooks booked for every lesson throughout the year
- Reach+ Subscription and career portfolio
- Googleclassroom
- Guidance Office/Library for speakers
- CPD for tutors at the beginning of year - show them the targets for 5th years.
- Study Skills Packs - Resources for teachers/students to use - available for download on Google Drive
- Career Portfolio from REACH+ - sent home to parents at end of each term.

6th Year Guidance Programme (LCE)

Objectives:

- To help each student in clearly defining an adequate positive self-concept and outlining his personal talents and potential through exploration of their strengths and linking them to possible careers/courses - through Career Portal Interest profiler link to careers/courses.
- To help students cope with examination tension and the emotional strain involved in the leaving certificate - lessons of mindfulness, study skills, 1:1 sessions when needed, workshops on mental health/resilience with external organisations, yoga & mindfulness with external trainers.
- To help students to clarify their career goals further and to see leaving certificate as a means to an end for each of them personally - continue tracking exam targets.
- To assist students in making well informed vocational choices
- To successfully manage the transition from 2nd to 3rd level/world of work by looking at topics such as CAO, PLC, Apprenticeships entry requirements, course content and career

progression opportunity using careerportal and qualifax.

- Guidance in application for schemes in developing vocational training such as HEAR/DARE/SUSI.
- Guidance in researching future options and applying to further education and training.

Activities:

- Building effective study habits through study planning journal
- Study habits will be encouraged in subject classes as well as Guidance classes - topics covered in Guidance classes are as follows: long-term goal setting (leaving certificate prediction) and short-term goal setting (weekly academic goal setting), time management and timetables, effective note taking, exam techniques, memory techniques, and a study method.
- Preparing for third level education through 1:1 interviews pre and post mock exams.
- Guidance through application processes such as CAO, HEAR/DARE, SUSI, PLC, UCAS and Apprenticeship - through guidance lessons and through guest speakers from DCU Access. Parent CAO information night provided for parents in December.
- Deadlines and important dates highlighted regularly and displayed on the School Website, updated weekly on their googleclassroom.
- Arranging guest speakers for all of the aforementioned topics and past alumni for motivation participation in Career Fair.
- Encouragement to attend Open Days and provide materials needed to make the most of these days - via CareerPortal.
- Information on College life through sessions on the following: budgeting, finding accommodation/accommodation options, looking after yourself, personal safety, student supports Looking to the future.
- LCA Students are provided with guidance through the VPG programme. Topics include: Job seeking skills, How employers advertise jobs, What employers want?, Applying for a job, CV's and application forms, Completing a job interview
- 1:1 interviews throughout the senior cycle with priority made for sixth year students to complete satisfactory CAO, UCAS and PLC applications and other issues through the referral process. The guidance counsellor is also available for students during the results/offers phase of transition in August and September.
- In September the GC will be present on the day of the Leaving Certificate Results to assist students with information and/guidance if required - GC will follow up on all students and collect progression data and update DEIS plan.
- Continued support through DCU Access - Ufirst programme.

Resources:

- IT Equipment - chromebooks booked for each lesson for the duration of the year.
- Reach+ Subscription and career portfolio

- Googleclassroom
- Guidance Office/Library for speakers
- CPD for tutors at the beginning of year - show them the targets for 6th years.
- Study Skills Packs - Resources for teachers/students to use - available for download on Google Drive
- Career Portfolio from REACH+ - sent home to parents at end of each term.
- Human resources - College/Apprenticeship liaison people, Northwest Dublin Partnership, DCU Access Team, Supergeneration.

5th Year Guidance Programme - LCA

Objectives:

- Enhance both their vocational development and their understanding of the world of work.
- Develop important workplace skills such as planning, communication and teamwork.
- Become more aware of their interests, aptitudes and skills with regard to the world of work.
- Identify general areas of employment that suit her/his own skills, qualities and interests.
- Investigate a range of career, education and training opportunities.
- Create a career plan for their future after school.
- Review and evaluate the effect of work placement experience and increased workplace and personal awareness on their career interests.

Activities:

- Lessons with the GC engaging with the content in Unit 1: The student and the world of work in Session 1 and Unit 2: The student and one particular field of work in Session 2.
- Present clarification about progression routes from Leaving Certificate Applied (ie: PLC/Apprenticeships/Public Service).
- Do Interest Profiler with students via Classroom Guidance and discuss/record findings on PDF from classroom guidance.
- Interview a person from a type of work the student is interested in (employed/self-employed/volunteer) - time to students to do this independently but help set this up for them finding contacts and showing them research tools.
- Survey people in the working world on the positive and negative experiences of the working life.
- Attend guest speakers/Career fairs.
- Do a multiple Intelligences test using Classroom Guidance and link this to possible careers and sectors.
- Do a career skills questionnaire and discuss results and link to vocational progression - reflect on skills they wish to develop and skills needed for desired careers.

- Create a career investigation using various research methods, qualifax, career portal, apprenticeships.ie, solas, interview people within this occupation - through Northwest Dublin Partnership, watch related videos/interviews, attend skills/careers fairs such as local apprenticeship fair (Finglas Youth Centre), World Skills Day (RDS), school summit, in-house career fair - present findings in a variety of mediums.
- Share portfolio with parents (classroom guidance PDFs).

Resources:

- IT - chromebooks needed for each class
- Classroom Guidance - Gold member subscription
- Googleclassroom
- Classroom Guidance Presentations
- Classroom Guidance self-assessments
- Classroom Guidance Online editable PDFs
- Human resources - contacts in SOLAS, NWDP, PLC liaisons, apprenticeship programme coordinators, past pupils.

6th Year Guidance (LCA)

Objectives:

- Enhance both their vocational development and their understanding of the world of work.
- Develop important workplace skills such as planning, communication and teamwork.
- Become more aware of their interests, aptitudes and skills with regard to the world of work.
- Identify general areas of employment that suit her/his own skills, qualities and interests.
- Investigate a range of career, education and training opportunities.
- Create a career plan for their future after school.
- Review and evaluate the effect of work placement experience and increased workplace and personal awareness on their career interests.
- Have a well-researched and suitable career/training course chosen for progression by the end of the academic year which matches with values, interests and expectations of each student.

Activities:

- Lessons with the GC engaging with the content in Unit 3: Information Building in Session 3 and Unit 4: Career Action Plan in Session 4.
- Report on information obtained on a number of visits to career exhibitions, colleges of further education, training centers.
- Research career and training opportunities that are available as a progression from the Leaving Certificate Applied through qualifax, career portal, apprenticeships.ie, guests from

apprenticeships (NWDP), PLC colleges and through visits to fairs and networking.

- Do an interest profiler on careerportal and compare results to last year (on classroom guidance) - use the tool on CareerPortal to match courses/careers of interest in order of suitability.
- Engage in other psychometric testing such as values, learning style and career skills tests.
- Getting work experience in an area students are considering as a possible career (every Friday).
- Link the results of interest and ability inventories to their action plan for the future.
- 1:1 sessions with Guidance Counsellor to do this work with them.
- Use materials used in other modules on LCA course such as Jobsearch, Workexp, English and Communication in action plan such as CV, letter of applications, interview skills.
- Report on lifelong learning and possible changes in the world of work by interviewing a person who changed job and/or attending in-house career fair with alumni.
- Personal Reflection task and 5 Year Action Plan using all the content/material over the two years.
- Apply for jobs/apprenticeships/training courses for after the Leaving Cert.
- In September the GC will be present on the day of the Leaving Certificate Results to assist students with information and/guidance if required - GC will follow up on all students and collect progression data and update DEIS plan.

Resources:

- IT - chromebooks needed for each class
- Classroom Guidance - Gold member subscription
- Googleclassroom
- Classroom Guidance Presentations
- Classroom Guidance self-assessments
- Classroom Guidance Online editable PDFs
- CareerPortal
- Qualifax
- Human resources - contacts in SOLAS, NWDP, PLC liaisons, apprenticeship programme coordinators, past pupils.

2.5 Co-Curricular Guidance Programme

Junior Cycle Co-Curricular Programme

1st Year

2nd Year

3rd Year

DCU Campus Tour	TUD Campus Tour	DCU Campus Tour
CAW activity week	CAW activity week	CAW activity week
DCU Maths quiz	DCU Maths Quiz	DCU Physics Workshop
DCU Sports Blitz	DCU Sports Blitz	DCU U Future Day
	DCU U Future Day	Options Talk (Parents & Students)
		Subject Choice Week

Senior Cycle Co-Curricular Programme

TY	5th Year	6th Year
Worldskills Event	TUD Campus Tour	DCU Campus Tour
CAW activity week	CAW activity week	CAW activity week
TY DCU Open Day	DCU U First	DCU Physics Workshop
DCU Multimedia Modules	DCU Maths Drop-in Sessions	DCU U Future Day
DCU Step-Up in STEM Modules	DCU Careers Round Table Talk	CAO Talk (Parents & Students)
TY Work Experience Programme	DCU Faculty Taster Workshops	Hear/Dare Speakers/past students
DNWP - Apprenticeship Talk	DCU Shadowing Days	DNWP - Local Career/College Fair
Subject Choice Week	DNWP - Local Career/College Fair	DNWP - Apprenticeship Fair
Mental Health Speakers	Finglas Hub - Grinds	Finglas Hub - Grinds
Summit Skills Fair		Past Pupil Speakers
Past Pupil Speakers		Past-Pupil Career Fair
Past-Pupil Career Fair		DNWP - Apprenticeship Workshops
		College Open Days
		Higher Options
		World Skills
		HEI & FETC Speakers

		1:1 Career Talks
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Parents are also supported throughout the year at different intervals. Talks, presentations and resources are shared with parents around issues such as Subject Choice, Senior Cycle Options, CAO/HEAR/DARE/PLC/Apprenticeship applications.

2.6 Guidance for Some

In St Vincent's, Guidance for some provides specific groups of students with the necessary support for their personal, social, educational, career development and transitioning needs. The Guidance Counsellor is primarily responsible for the Career Guidance Programme; however, many other members of staff play a role in the overall delivery of the Guidance Programme.

Target Groups Junior Cycle:

- My Friends Youth - S.Flood (Guidance Counsellor)
- ALERT - E. McLoughlin (BFL) & R. Doran (HSCL)
- Why Try - E. McLoughlin (BFL)
- Exam Motivation - S. Flood (Guidance Counsellor) & E. McLoughlin (BFL)
- Social Skills - J. Lyons (AEN)
- Check & Connect - Level 1 & 2 students from Care Team list

Target Groups Senior Cycle:

- Apprenticeship Workshops (J. Toomey - DNWP)
- UFirst (DCU)
- DARE student applications (S. Flood)
- HEAR student applications (S. Flood)
- TY DCU Work Experience
- St Vincent de Paul Institute & Academy Fund
- 3rd Years who you straight into 5th Year
- Check & Connect - Level 1 & 2 students from Care Team list
- TY Mentors

Target groups are set up annually as preventative interventions for students needing additional support. Depending on the need, small groups of students from Junior Cycle will participate in programmes such as 'Friends For Life', 'Alert' and 'Why Try'. Students will be referred to these groups by the Care Team, tutors, year heads and class teachers. These groups focus primarily on social/emotional/behavioural development.

A Check-and-Connect system is active in our school and involves 1:1 engagement between target students and school staff. All participating staff members are trained in the system before they begin. This mostly involves students who are low level on the Care Team list checking in once a week with a buddy teacher. The teacher then reports back to the Care Team if the students seem to need additional support.

Mentoring takes place between TY students and 1st Year students. TY mentors check on 1st year students daily to help them transition and support them with any problems that may arise. Mentors are trained in this system before they begin.

2.7 Guidance for Few

In St. Vincent's, Guidance For Few involves individual students who receive additional support in meeting their developmental needs or when dealing with a personal crisis. Some students may also need extra support when dealing with transitions. These students range from new students with severe anxiety/health issues to early school leavers. This support is mostly carried out by the Guidance Counsellor but will inevitably involve other members of the school community who have been trained in dealing with vulnerable students. When the support required for a student is more intensive, a referral to an external agency will be employed.

Target Students - Guidance for Few:

- Students identified as needing additional personal, social, educational or career support.
- Such students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by the Care Team, Year Heads, Tutors, Teachers, SNAs or self-referral.
- In 6th year individuals who may be applying for courses/supports which require additional one-to-one support. These include UCAS, HPAT & DARE applications.
- Early School Leavers will need individual support in transitioning to a different educational/vocational setting such as YouthReach.
- Students struggling with educational transitions.
- Parents of students who receive additional support will also be supported by the Guidance Counsellor when necessary.

The Care Team meets once a week to discuss level 1, 2 and 3 students. All level 1 & 2 students are linked in with a Check & Connect trained teacher. All level 3 students and some level 1 & 2 students are linked in with a Care Team member depending on the need. The Guidance Counsellor links in with many students from the Care Team list in a 1:1 setting. These meetings are logged and notes are taken by the Guidance Counsellor and are stored online using a password protected system (Google Drive).

Parents are also included and supported with their child's individual needs. Parents are involved when linking students with external agencies such as counselling, family mediation, educational institutions etc.

Section 3 - Communication Network

St Vincent's operates a Whole School Guidance system. Communication networks are essential in providing Whole School Guidance support. The following subsections highlight how the communication network operates in the school:

3.1 Care Team

The Care Team meets once a week for an hour (Mondays 10am). The team works from a list of target students in need of various levels of support; the list is updated weekly. The Care Team consists of school management (M. Quinn/N. McCann), the Guidance Counsellor (S. Flood), the Behaviour for Learning Teacher (E. McLoughlin), the Home School Liaison Officer (R. Doran) and the School Completion Officer (L. Roberts). The target list of students is stored on GoogleDrive through a shared folder. Each week the Care Team updates the folder constantly adapting the document to the changing needs of the students. Each student is allocated at least one member of the Care Team to link in with depending on the need. Each student is also identified as needing level 1, 2 or 3 support. Staff are aware of the students on the list and their level of need - a live document has been shared with them on Google Drive. The document is organised in a traffic light system. RED= LEVEL 3 students, YELLOW = LEVEL 2 students and GREEN = LEVEL 1 students. Each week the Care Team goes through the target list and each member gets a chance to update the team on their allocated students, seek advice and share new students who have been referred. For Care Team Meeting template please see Appendix iii.

3.2 Guidance Appointments

Referrals:

Guidance appointments are conducted by the two guidance counsellors in the school (S. Flood & N. McCann). Appointments are 1:1 and are focused on issues surrounding social, personal, educational and career development. Students who attend appointments may be referred by the Care Team members if the need falls under the expert area of the guidance counsellor. Students can also make one-to-one appointments on request (in person, via a parent, via a teacher or other staff member) or via email. Class Teachers, Tutors, SNA's or other staff members can email the Care Team or Guidance Counsellor directly with concerns about a student. In the email the students initials and class will be used as identification. Parents are also encouraged to refer their children to the guidance counsellor if they feel necessary. Parents can request an appointment by asking in person, emailing, calling or speaking to their child's tutor or year head. The guidance counsellor will often

meet with a student several times but if the student requires extended support they may be referred to outside agencies.

Record Keeping:

Scheduled One-to-One Meetings will be recorded by the guidance counsellor on a spreadsheet which is password protected on GoogleDrive. The guidance counsellor will also make notes on each meeting and store them in folders password protected on the GoogleDrive (Each student will have their own folder). These notes are for the personal use of the guidance counsellor, for example, if they wish to revise the previous session in preparation for the next. Counsellor notes are not shared with other members of staff, students or parents in accordance with Confidentiality and with adherence to Child Protection Legislation. Counselling Records are retained in a secure location for the length of time established by the legislation (currently 7 Years). The template for the Guidance Counselling Meeting Notes can be found in APPENDIX iv.

Confidentiality:

The guidance counsellor explains the limits of confidentiality to each student on commencement of a meeting and the role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in case of danger to the safety of student and others or if a crime is about to be committed and works within IGC code of Ethics. Confidentiality procedure is in line with the School's Confidentiality Policy. Consent from parents is not essential but students are encouraged to talk to parents about their engagement with the guidance counsellor. Parents will be contacted if the child's health/safety (or the health/safety of others) is at risk. If this is the case, parents will be given advice from the guidance counsellor on what they can do to support their child. If a child safety concern is raised in a meeting the guidance counsellor will discuss the matter with the DLP. Every effort is made to honour the privacy of each individual when appropriate.

3.2 Data Management

Every effort is made to keep all confidential information and materials in a secure place. Documentation such as psychometric testing is saved on a password protected platform (testingforschools.ie) and can only be accessed by management, guidance counsellors and the SEN coordinator. Student files containing confidential documentation such as psychological assessments are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the school office and can only be accessed by authorised personnel. Guidance Counselling meetings for educational/vocational/personal issues are recorded and stored on GoogleDrive with password protection. Likewise, other guidance related material such as confidential letters, referral forms, application forms etc are stored in a password protected GoogleDrive folder. Only the Guidance Counsellor has access to these files. Guidance Counselling Records are retained in a secure location for the length of time established by the legislation

(currently 7 Years).

3.3 Links within the Guidance Community

Internal Partners

The Whole School Guidance Programme relies on strong links between the Guidance Counsellors and other partners in the school. The Guidance Dept. works closely with the following partners:

DEIS/SSE school planning team

The Guidance department works with the DEIS team to plan targets and actions within the DEIS framework (see section 1.2).

Care Team

The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the Care Team and works collaboratively with all members on Guidance for All, Some and Few (see section 3.1).

Whole School Guidance Committee

The Whole School Guidance Committee meets each term in order to plan and carry out target initiatives identified as needing improvement (see section 1.3).

Wellbeing Committee

The Wellbeing Committee meets several times a year and the Wellbeing coordinator works with all relevant staff members to ensure crossovers between different programmes are effective. The Wellbeing Committee will be working closely with the Guidance Team in 2023/24 to plan for Junior Cycle Guidance under the new recommendations.

Management team

The Principal, Vice Principal and AP holders work collaboratively with the guidance department in all aspects of the guidance provisions. The guidance counsellor is in constant consultation with management in order to support the ever changing and evolving needs of the students in the school.

Administrative Staff

The administration aids the guidance counsellor with regards to communications between outside agencies/parents and the guidance dept.

Learning Support Staff/ AEN coordinators

In the school the guidance counsellor works closely with the AEN team and has specific knowledge of students with AEN as well as the initiatives that each student is engaged with. The guidance counsellor will often collaborate with the AEN team when deciding what level of support is appropriate and the actions needed for an individual student.

In the classroom, the guidance counsellor differentiates learning practices to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum/information on future education/career pathways and does so with the aid of the AEN class profiles.

Through the First Year Induction Programme, the guidance counsellor attains information regarding the students individual Learning Styles and this information is shared with class teachers and the AEN team.

DARE applications are made by the guidance counsellor in consultation with the AEN team, students and parents.

Target groups are identified in collaboration with the AEN team and students are allocated a place in the various small groups based on their individual needs.

Networking opportunities are availed of and used as a means of ensuring the students with AEN have access to further support after school. (For example through the National Learning Network).

The Guidance Counsellor has engaged in CPD to further understand their role in the inclusion of students with AEN.

There is a 'Career Guidance' section in the AEN policy outlining the collaborative relationship between the Guidance Dept. and the AEN team.

SNAs

SNA staff are invaluable in communicating issues students are having within the day-to-day life of school. SNA's are also very valuable in helping the guidance counsellor support students particularly those at level 2 and level 3 support.

LCA/TY Coordinator

The LCA/TY Coordinator is essential in the planning and execution of extra-curricular activities for both LCA and TY students. In TY, the coordinator is consulted with when planning guidance related trips, speakers, programmes and work experience. In LCA, the coordinator is also consulted with regards trips, speakers, programmes and work experience. Both the guidance counsellor and TY/LCA coordinator collaborate on new initiatives for both programmes. The Guidance Counsellor has a

weekly timetabled Career Class with all TY groups. The Guidance Counsellor also conducts the Guidance Module for VPG.

Form Teachers/Year Heads

Form teachers and Year Heads are the often first contact people for students and parents in need of additional support from the guidance counsellor and they will often refer students for 1:1 support. The Guidance Counsellor links in with Form Teachers and Years Heads regularly. Form Teachers and Year Heads help support the Areas of Learning by acting as a support to the students in their class and a link between individual students/parents and the care team. Tutor Time is part of the Guidance Allocation at Senior Cycle and therefore is a vital support for students.

Subject Teachers

Class teachers are invaluable in identifying issues with students as they spend so much time with them daily. Teachers often make referrals to the Guidance Counsellor based on their observations or conversations they have with students or parents. Teachers are aware of the students on the Care Team list and keep a watchful eye on them in class. Some teachers engage in Check & Connect with level 2 & level 3 support students, meeting them once a week. Class Teachers have had CPD with the Guidance Counsellor on the Areas of Learning and Competencies and each subject department has a page dedicated to the delivery of guidance in their individual subject. Most teachers get involved in events such as CAW and Subject Choice week. All teachers have been trained in Study Skills and explicitly teach this in their classes using the provided resources. 2nd and 3rd year students are visited by the guidance counsellor at different intervals throughout the year; however, the Guidance Curricular Programme is delivered by subject teachers who have been trained by the Guidance Counsellor.

BFL, HSCL and the School Completion Officer

There is often a crossover between school refusal, attendance, behaviour and guidance. Many students who are refusing school or struggling to follow the Code of Behaviour need social/personal, educational, career support. The guidance counsellor works closely with the BFL teacher, HSCL officer and school completion officer to support such students and to maintain a good communication network with parents/guardians.

Parents

Parents are essential in supporting students. They can often be consulted in supporting level 1 students (see section 3.2). Parents also consulted when offering level 2 support to students such as small target groups (see section 2.6). Parents are also involved in Guidance for All. The guidance counsellor maintains a website to communicate important and topical information to parents from

home. Parents are invited into the school at regular intervals to pass important information to them around Subject Choice, CAO, Grants etc. (see section 2.5). Parents have been included in the data gathering and evaluation self-evaluation process. The guidance counsellor attends relevant Parent-Teacher meetings annually. In 6th Year the Guidance Counsellor officially meets the parents for 1:1 session twice (once post-midterms and once post-mocks). Additional 1:1 meetings with parents are also welcomed as needed. Parents are involved in the HEAR/DARE/CAO/PLC applications. Junior parents are welcomed annually for a coffee morning to meet with the Care Team and voice their concerns.

Students

Students are the core of the Whole School Guidance programme. The programme's top priority is to support students and it is essential to include them in their own care. Students are at the centre of every section in this plan. Student voice is extremely important to the guidance dept. Students are involved in the data gathering and evaluation self-evaluation process. Students are also included in meetings/consultations with parents. When deciding on a support plan for a student their voice is valued and respected.

Tracking Coordinator

The Tracking Coordinator uses the Athena programme to help inform the Guidance Programme for all year groups. Attainment information is vital when planning and carrying out support programmes. Teachers help work with students on Target Grades and the Guidance Counsellor reviews targets regularly with exam groups.

Internal Referrals

After meeting a student the guidance counsellor may see benefit in referring the student to an internal school support. Depending on the nature of the need, a student may be referred to the AEN team, the BFL teacher or School Completion Officer.

Students may be recommended for level 2 support groups carried out in the school by the different support personnel. Groups include My Friends Youth (mental health & resilience training), Why Try (School refusal/motivation) and Alert (Regulation). Parents are also encouraged to attend the Parent's Plus Programme offered in the school by the Home School Liaison Person.

For short-term personal/social issues students may be referred to our link counsellor operating in the Finglas Youth Resource Centre. This counsellor will provide six free sessions with students in need of additional support.

External Partners

St Vincent's has many external links with various agencies and works with them as part of the Whole School Guidance Programme.

DCU Outreach Programme

The link with DCU is invaluable as it allows all students to access college support and see themselves in this community in their future.

Current Junior Cycle activities include FutureU programme, Physics workshops, Maths Quiz and Sports Blitz.

Current TY activities include Multimedia Programme, Step Up in STEM workshops, Work Experience placements (Arthur Cox/ Beaumont Hospital).

Current Senior Cycle activities include Ufirst Programme, weekly drop-in Maths grinds, faculty taster workshops, shadowing days, round table talks.

All subject teachers are invited to lead the activities and initiatives in the DCU Outreach Programme, promoting collaboration and leadership.

Past Pupils

The guidance counsellor keeps a contact list of past pupils and invites them back to the school at different points in the year to inspire students. Past pupils have engaged in College Awareness Week talks, HEAR/DARE talks with Access.ie staff, Alumni Career Fairs and NWDP Hub talks. We believe this promotes a sense of future aspirations for students of all years.

Third Level Institutes

HEI's and FET colleges link in on a regular basis with the Guidance Team and arrange events such as campus tours, speakers and career guidance events. TY and 6th Year students engage the most with these activities as they are planning their future learning. The Guidance Counsellor is in contact with the college's liaison people regarding college applications and other programmes.

HEAR/DARE/CAO/SUSI

The guidance counsellor attends the CAO conference each year and reads all communications from the CAO annually. Access is invited into the school to give HEAR/DARE talks and the guidance dept. Communicate regularly with Access regarding HEAR/DARE applicants. The guidance counsellor attends SUSI information sessions each year when available and contacts SUSI regarding student

applications. Information is then passed on to students in Career class and Parents via Information Night.

National Learning Network/AHEAD

The guidance counsellor liaises with the network regarding students with additional needs transitioning from second level school into education/employment. Our contact office is located in Phisborough. Ahead provides information sessions and support for students exploring post-secondary school options.

Youthreach/Community Training Centres

The guidance counsellor liaises with both Youthreach and other local training centres regarding early school leavers. They set up appointments for students and parents and provide information and advice on the available courses. Small groups of LCA students visit the Finglas Training Centre (SOLAS) in 5th Year to see what programmes are available after school.

Dublin North West Partnership

Dublin North West Partnership is our local Adult Guidance service and links in with us regularly to provide relevant courses, workshops, speakers and general support for students leaving school. They particularly focus on small groups of senior students interested in apprenticeships. The NWDP provides career support for past pupils and also educational funding to students living in their district.

Since 2020, the DNWP has collaborated with DCU in creating the Hub. The hub offers our students free grinds in a variety of subjects both in person and online. They also support students seeking education as a career path.

The DNWP has also set up a network of Guidance counsellors working in the D11 area. This network meets several times in the year to attend CPD workshops and to plan events such as career/college/apprenticeship fairs for the area.

IGC

Through the IGC, the guidance counsellors are informed of important information and events such as Higher Options, World Skills, CAO, HEAR/DARE, SUSI etc. The IGC also offers CPD opportunities and branch meetings which the guidance counsellor attends regularly.

ERST Guidance Network

The ERST Guidance Network is made up of guidance counsellors from around the country working in ERST schools. The network meets online several times a year to discuss topics and provide CPD.

FYRC

The Finglas Youth Resource Centre is a great resource for our school and the students. They provide mentoring and counselling for students who need some additional support outside of school.

Mental Health Services

The guidance counsellor engages with a long list of mental health support services regularly to outsource support for level 3 students. There are many local and national organisations the guidance utilises in supporting students. Such organisations include: The Den (Finglas), FYRC, School Completion Finglas, Crosscare Drug and Alcohol Service, Crosscare Teen Counselling, Barnardos, Pieta House, Daughters of Charity Family Centre, CAHMS, Jigsaw, Foroige, SASSY.

Referrals to External Agencies

On occasion, it may be necessary to refer students to external agencies due to specific individual needs that are beyond the skill or remit of the Guidance Counsellor (who are not psychotherapists/psychologists or clinical psychological experts). Referrals to mental health services are done in consultation with parents. Such services include JIGSAW, Crosscare, Daughters of Charity, SASSY, Bernardos, Pieta House.

If a student presents with serious mental health or psychological concerns a referral to the GP and or CAHMS may be recommended by the Guidance Counsellor. Parents would take the lead on this referral with the assistance of the guidance counsellor and other relevant school staff. The school may deem it necessary to provide the GP/CAHMS with a statement reflecting their concerns for the student.

Referrals to Tusla are done in consultation with the DLP or Deputy DLP where appropriate in line with Child Protection policy.

If a student is struggling to engage in school for a variety of reasons, the guidance counsellor may refer the student to the school's assigned NEPS psychologist. The NEPS form is filled out in collaboration with the guidance counsellor, subject teachers, SNAs, AEN staff and parents.

For early school leavers, many external agencies are consulted in collaboration with students and parents. Agencies such as Youthreach, Discovery Centre, Inspire Programme, Access to

Apprenticeships and other community training centres have collaborated with the guidance counsellor where the retention and progression of students is at risk.

3.5 Communication Systems

The Guidance Dept. communicates with all stakeholders in a variety of ways depending on the information and recipient.

Email/Phone

The Guidance Counsellor has an email address and is also part of the Care Team email address. Information from and to staff and parents can be easily communicated through email. Parents are given the Guidance Counsellor's email address when their child enters first year and they can also find it on the school website. The Guidance Counsellor will often phone parents to discuss their child and their support plan. Parents contact the Guidance Counsellor through the school line.

Website

There is a Guidance page on the official school website. The Guidance page is linked to Career Portal and is updated regularly by the Guidance Counsellor. School specific information can be found there as well as links to events, other relevant websites and important documentation. Contact information for the guidance counsellor is also found here.

GoogleClassroom

Each Career Guidance class has a googleclassroom page. Information and activities can be shared with students and parents through this app. Posts are updated regularly and include links to application forms, events such as open days and tasks to be completed.

REACH+

Each Senior Student has access to a REACH+ prescription. Over the three year senior cycle they build a career guidance portfolio on their account. This information is compiled and reports are sent to parents throughout the three years. This information is crucial in 6th Year and parents are encouraged to look through the profile with the guidance counsellor during parent teacher meetings. Chromebooks are used in every Senior Cycle Career class and the guidance counsellor works through the Career Portal material online. Career classes are paperless for the most part.

Classroom Guidance

All LCA students have a Classroom Guidance subscription which allows them access to materials for their VPG module. The VPG teacher downloads the module worksheets and presentations from

Classroom Guidance and places the information on their Googleclassroom. VPG utilises the chromebooks each class and all material is virtual. VPG is paperless for the most part.

VSWARE

Vsware is used as a means of communication between staff and parents. The guidance counsellor will look at teacher reports on vsware as well as attendance, assessments and notes when meeting with students or talking to parents. They will also use the notes section to log important information about conversations with parents/phone calls/messages/reports. The guidance counsellor can text a parent through Vsware if needed. AEN and Care Team information is communicated through links on VSWARE.

GoogleDrive

Google Drive is the main platform in St Vincent's. All staff have a gmail account and a drive. Staff share drives, documents, forms and google classrooms with each other and their students. The Guidance Counsellor has a Guidance Folder on the drive which is private. This folder stores resources, counselling logs/notes, 1:1 career logs, CPD certs, external contacts, application forms, target intervention lists, event planning materials, meeting minutes etc. Some folders within the main folder are shared with other relevant staff. Other folders such as counselling notes remain private and can only be accessed by the guidance counsellor. The guidance department is also involved in shared drives such as the Guidance Committee Drive and the Care Team Drive.

Athena Tracking

The Athnea Tracking software helps the guidance counsellor track student progress, track students reaching/not reaching their potential, and set targets. This information is used to inform target intervention groups for students who are underachieving. The information is also helpful when meeting with parents and students regarding education and careers.

Social Media

St Vincent's has Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts. These accounts are used by all staff to promote the teaching and learning in the school, send messages to the public and promote a sense of belonging in the community. The Guidance Counsellor and other teachers also highlight activities and trips students experience in the school through photos and messages online.

Information Sessions

Most information sessions provided by the guidance dept. Are done in person on the school premises. Parents are invited to annual information sessions in the school such as CAO/College

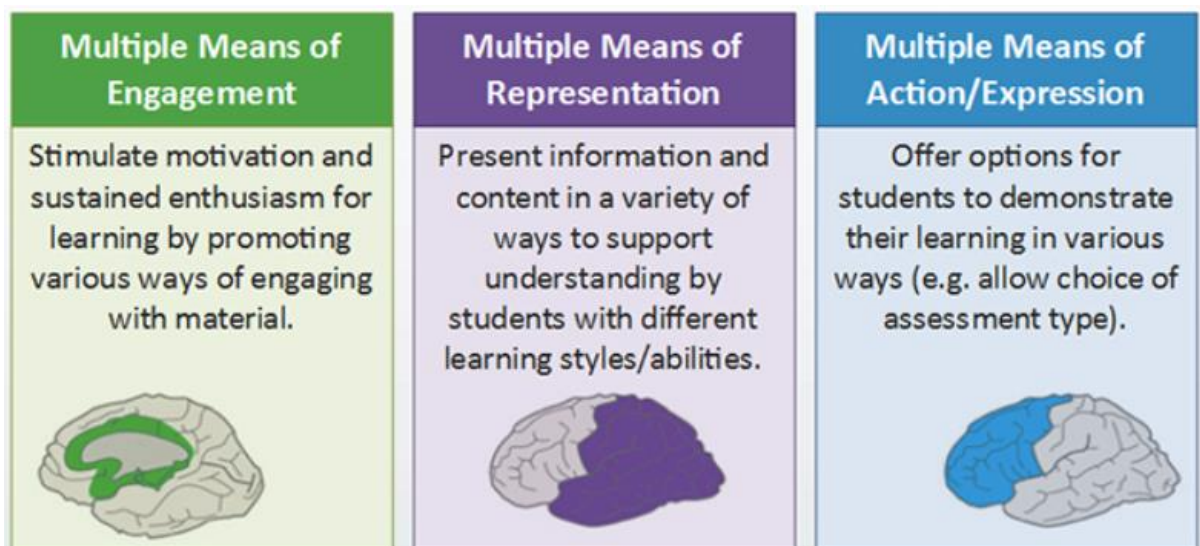
Night, Options/Subject Choice Night, Open Night and Parent Teacher Meetings. Parents of 1st Year students are encouraged to attend a coffee morning where the Care Team greets parents and provides information about their support in school. If parents cannot attend Information Sessions or need additional support from the guidance counsellor they can arrange a 1:1 meeting at any time in the year.

Section 4 - Inclusion

Whole School Guidance in St Vincent's is inclusive with a holistic, student centred approach and involves collaboration with a number of stakeholders. All students will acquire an appropriate level of guidance to ensure they are supported in their personal/social, educational and vocational development. In order to ensure this level of individualised support, Whole School Guidance operates on a continuum of support and follows the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (Guidance for All, Some, Few - see section 2).

4.1 Inclusion in the Classroom

All first year students have a Career Guidance Module in 1st year. In this module they learn about themselves, their values, their goals and their learning style. They learn to embrace their individuality and what works for them. They do a learning style test and are made aware of how they can work with their individual style. All students stick a coloured sticker in the front of their journal to represent their learning style and to remind teachers of this in class. All staff have received CPD by the guidance counsellor on adapting teaching and learning to individual styles and have been given a folder of shared resources for this. The Guidance Dept. encourages teachers to adapt their teaching and learning to include all types of learners based on the UDL model:



Career classes are student-centred and designed to embrace and promote individuality. Over the course of secondary school all students are encouraged to independently explore themselves using a variety of tools and activities. Students will do self-assessments to explore their interests, strengths, learning styles, values, intelligences, personality, skills etc. Students are guided in this process but their voice is at the centre. Students are supported in getting experiences such as work placements, training opportunities and college experiences tailored to them. Through these experiences students are encouraged to build skills needed for their future based on the pathway they would like to take. Goal setting is an important part of career guidance for all and it is done using their journals, Athena and REACH+ tools. Follow on 1:1 sessions are always encouraged for additional support outside the guidance classroom particularly in senior cycle.

At senior cycle individual pathways are highlighted to all students and no one path is promoted over the other. Posters are displayed showing the different pathways available, speakers from different pathways are invited in as well as past students. Students are brought to different institutions (HEI, PLC, Apprenticeships, SOLAS) to get a sense of what pathway would suit them best. Students attend annual events such as World Skills, Higher Options, School Summit, Apprenticeship Fair etc to encourage an individual approach to future planning. Student voice is at the centre of their planning and they are guided and supported in this process. Transition is planned in advance so students have the support they need when they leave secondary school. The support will depend on the individual needs of the students and may include adult employment links, financial aids, additional support services etc. External links and parents are invaluable in this process.

Career Guidance lessons are designed with inclusivity in mind. Differentiation, scaffolding, drawing on interests, varying methodologies & presentation of work are all utilised where possible. Inclusion is a Whole School teaching & learning initiative in St. Vincent's and all staff have done CPD in this area.

4.2 Guidance & AEN

In St. Vincent's, the guidance counsellor works closely with the AEN team and has specific knowledge of students with AEN. Students with AEN may need level 2 & 3 support (Guidance for Some/Few). The Guidance Counsellor is aware of students' ISPs as well as the initiatives that each student is engaged with. The guidance counsellor will often collaborate with the AEN team when deciding what level/kind of support is appropriate and the actions needed for an individual student. Class profiles and individual student reports are available for the guidance counsellor when planning supports.

Target groups are identified in collaboration with the AEN team and students are allocated a place in the various small groups based on their individual needs. The guidance counsellor and AEN staff collaborate on providing specific target groups and interventions (see section 2.6).

DARE applications are made by the guidance counsellor in consultation with the AEN team, students and parents. If students have a report on file, the Guidance Counsellor will use this in making the application.

In the classroom, the guidance counsellor differentiates learning practices to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum/information on future education/career pathways and does so with the aid of the AEN class profiles.

Through the first-year induction programme, the guidance counsellor gets to know the students and pays particular attention to students with AEN as they may find certain aspects of transitioning more difficult.

Networking opportunities are availed of and used as a means of ensuring the students with AEN have access to further support after school. Organisations such as AHEAD and the National Learning Network provide support for students with AEN in their transition out of secondary school. The guidance counsellor communicates career fairs/information sessions and scheduled meetings with students/parents and said organisations.

The Guidance Counsellor liaises with our NEPs psychologist regarding students with AEN. Many times the guidance counsellor will identify a student with additional needs whereby the student has no record of additional needs prior to secondary school. In this situation, the guidance counsellor will liaise with the student, parents, Care Team AEN team and external agencies such as NEPS, CAHMS or primary care for advice or support in guiding the student.

The Guidance Counsellor has engaged and continues to engage in CPD to further understand their role in the inclusion of students with AEN. Organisations such as OIDE, IGC and Parents Plus have provided CPD in this area.

There is a 'Career Guidance' section in the AEN policy outlining the collaborative relationship between the Guidance Dept. and the AEN team.

There is currently no ASD unit in St. Vincent's so it is very important that ASD students feel supported in the mainstream classroom.

TY and LCA students engage in Work Experience as part of their programme. The guidance counsellor pays particular attention to students with AEN in finding appropriate experience for those students. Local businesses have been very helpful in providing appropriate placements for our AEN students in the past.

4.3 Guidance for Vulnerable/Minority Groups

Certain students/ groups of students will need bespoke guidance based on their situation and level of need. The following groups of students may need specialised guidance support:

HEAR Students

As a DEIS school we would have many students who would be the first generation to attend college in their families. These students would need extra support and would engage in programmes such as Access Programmes, DCU Ufirst, HEAR scheme etc. Parents will also be encouraged to meet with the guidance counsellor for support around college applications/grants etc as they may not be familiar with the process. Also students in state care would need additional support in applying for HEAR and other access schemes.

DARE Students

As well as students with AEN, students with disabilities, illness and mental health issues are supported by the guidance counsellor. These students need support in applying for the DARE scheme and this is done in collaboration with the student, parents and outside agencies such as health care specialists, consultants, psychiatrists etc. Students with disabilities and illness may need help in school with social/personal and educational development and the guidance counsellor will collaborate with key stakeholders in offering individualised support.

RACE Students

Students granted Reasonable Accommodation in state exams are known to the Guidance Dept. The guidance counsellor will help students and parents with exam preparation and liaise with the AEN team. In some cases, students need RACE for social/personal/emotional issues and the guidance counsellor will arrange the reasonable accommodation with the SEC in collaboration with parents, students and the AEN team.

Culturally Diverse Students

St Vincent's is a very ethnically diverse school with students of many different cultural backgrounds. These students and their parents may need additional support with social/personal, educational and career development due to the lack of familiarity with the Irish system. Parents are often requested to meet with the guidance counsellor to discuss college fees, college applications, progression routes, post-school options, subject choice, mental health services, access routes etc.

College Fees is of particular importance to the guidance counsellor in supporting non-EU and refugee students and parents. Helping foreign national students, refugees and asylum seekers in applying for college and knowing their fee status is very important and involves liaising with external bodies.

It is the responsibility of the guidance counsellor to ensure students feel safe and included in the school community regardless of their cultural background. The school has promoted cultural

awareness and diversity by organising Culture Day and including the flags/names of our students' nationalities around the school.

Travelling Community

Students from the travelling/roma community often need support in retention and progression to college/employment. It is important that those students know their options and plan for their future based on their individual interests. The DCU Access programme has a representative from the travelling community who reaches out to our students and offers support on options after school. Pavee Point is an external link for students within the traveller and roma community and the guidance dept. Link in with this agency when necessary.

EAL Students

There are many students with EAL in St. Vincent's and they are supported by the AEN team. EAL students may find school difficult due to their language barrier and may need extra support with social/personal, educational and career development. The guidance counsellor collaborates with students, parents and AEN staff to support such students. Using translation apps, personal translators and google translate in meetings/emails to students and parents.

4.4 Educational Transitions

The Whole School Guidance Programme supports each educational transition stage in secondary level education. The main transitional phases occur from primary to post-primary, Junior Cycle to TY, TY to Senior Cycle and Senior Cycle to post-secondary pathways. Educational transitions can be stressful times for both students and parents and this stress can be compounded when a student has additional needs. It is vital therefore that the student support staff keep open communication and consolidation with students and parents.

Primary to Post-Primary

An AP1 postholder coordinates a programme for incoming first year students. This programme involves planning prior to the students' entrance in September. The HSCL & Guidance Counsellor visit feeder primary schools to talk about the school and what to expect. Primary students and parents are invited into the school for the Open Night which the guidance counsellor attends. A student support room is set up on Open Night to answer any questions parents might have. Students come in to sit their CAT4 assessment in April prior to their entrance where they have a school tour, meet students/teachers and have lunch together. Students have 3 weeks of induction before they start their full timetable. Student passports are reviewed from primary school. Any students with AEN will be met prior to entry and parents will collaborate with the AEN team to discuss support. The first year induction programme continues as a module for the entire year to extend support to

students (You Are Here - 4 Schools). Parents are invited to a coffee morning in September to meet the support staff (Management, Year Head, Tutors, HSCL, AEN, Guidance Counsellor). First year students have TY mentors who help them at tutor time and lunch time with adapting to changing classes, lockers, organisation etc. In our August staff meetings the AEN team runs through a list of students with AEN and gives advice to teachers on how to support these students.

The guidance counsellor meets all students in their first few weeks and delivers part of the induction programme called 'My Support System'. The guidance counsellor then continues support for all through the Wellbeing module. 1st Year students get 10 scheduled classes a year - the aim of these classes is to ease transition, help students become independent learners and begin the process of goal setting.

The guidance counsellor collects data on students (teacher questionnaires, student talks, parents) and runs an 8 week resilience programme with a small group of students needing additional support in the transition. The guidance counsellor also sees many students 1:1 in first year who need more intensive support in the transition.

Junior Cycle to TY

The transition from Junior Cycle to TY begins prior to students entering 4th year. The vast majority of our students will do TY (roughly 3-10 students per year will skip). The guidance counsellor gives talks to the students in 3rd Year regarding their options after Junior Cycle. Parents are also invited into school for a Senior Options talk. In TY the guidance counsellor organises bonding days for the students, in particular, DCU's Team Building VR labs workshop. The guidance counsellor has a scheduled period with each TY group. The guidance counsellor also meets with TY students 1:1 regarding issues such as new class groups, making new friends, fitting in - all of which are common difficulties TY students face.

TY to Senior Cycle

TY students work on Key Skills in all their subjects that will prepare them for the Senior Cycle curriculum. In Career class TY students begin building their portfolios which prepares them for 5th & 6th year future planning (see section 2.4). TY students also engage in the Subject Choice event that runs over a full week in March. This event involves daily activities such as Teacher Presentations, linking subjects to careers, Subject Choice Speed Dating, videos on Subject Choice created by past pupils. Parents are also invited into a talk on Subject Choice to help guide students in their decisions. Parents are sent home a copy of their child's TY Career Guidance Portfolio to review and discuss. The guidance counsellor attends Parent Teacher meetings in TY.

Students will need help deciding what Leaving Cert option to take (LCA OR LCE). Parents may need to be called in to discuss these two options and which one would best suit the individual student.

Senior Cycle to Post-Secondary School Pathways

The entire Senior Cycle Guidance programme (see section 2.4) and Senior Cycle Co-Curricular initiatives (see section 2.5) are designed to aid the transition from Senior Cycle to post-secondary school pathways.

The guidance counsellor plays a pivotal role in guiding students through these transitions in Career classes, co-curricular events/activities/initiatives and in 1:1 personal/social/educational/career meetings.

6th Year students require both group and individual sessions with the guidance counsellor to support their educational, career and transitional decisions. Every 6th year student gets one guidance class each week. The guidance team also meets students 1:1 at least once prior to mock exams for vocational/career guidance. 6th year students can meet 1:1 with the GC whenever necessary throughout the year and after results the following September. The guidance counsellor records 1:1 meetings and stores the records on Google Drive in a password protected folder. Student records are continually updated as the year progresses. Career Profiles are created for each 6th year student on REACH+.

LCA students get 2 classes per week of VPG. The Guidance Module is carried out by the school GC and a key assignment is done in every session for this. The focus of this module is on Career Awareness, Self-Assessment, Career Research, Goal Setting and Work Experience and Transitioning to the workplace/college.

AEN students may need additional support in this process and the guidance counsellor collaborates with students, parents and the AEN team in this process (see section 4.3).

Early School Leavers will need individual support in transitioning to a different educational/vocational setting such as YouthReach. Parents and students are consulted in this process.

DEIS Strand - Supporting Educational Transitions

Supporting Educational Transitions is one of the key strands in our DEIS/SSE plan. The guidance counsellor leads the development of this strand along with a small group of teachers. This group, led by the guidance counsellor, meets several times in the year to monitor and evaluate the targets and actions under this strand (see section 1.2).

The 2023-2026 targets are:

1. There will be an increase in the proportion of students who proceed to higher education on completion of the senior cycle from 52% (achieved 22) to 55%.

2. We will maintain the percentage at below 10% of students whose destination on completion of the senior cycle is unemployment rather than progression to further education.

The DEIS plan has been ratified by the Board of Management and is under constant review based on the SSE process.

For the full Supporting Educational Transitions plan see appendix v.

Section 5 - Guidance-Related Policies and Procedures

5.1 Guidance Related Policies

The Guidance Plan should be read in conjunction with the following list of policies. These policies are available through the school - <https://www.stvincentsd11.ie/policies>.

- Critical Incident
- Anti-Bullying
- RSE
- Attendance
- Learning Support
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Covid-19
- Digitalised Guidance
- GDPR
- Whole School Plan

5.2 Guidance Related Procedures

Guidance Procedures that Support the Achievement of the Aims of the School Guidance Programme are as follows:

Subject Choice

The guidance counsellor helps inform students and parents when choosing subjects at different intervals.

In first year students must choose two optional subjects from the following list: Art, Science, Woodwork, French. First year students get taster workshops in each subject during their 3 week induction programme. If students would like to change their mind after that point they may be referred to the guidance counsellor.

In TY/3rd year students moving into Leaving Cert Est. will choose four subjects from the following list: French, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Art, Business, Accountancy, Geography, History, Construction Studies. The Guidance Dept. hosts a subject choice week for all students choosing Senior Cycle subjects in March each year (including 3rd year students). After this week, students and parents choose subjects using VSWARE. Students will choose their top 5 options in order of preference and VSWARE will generate bands. Students may not get their top three choices. If students or parents are unhappy with the subject choices they may be referred to the guidance counsellor. Students and parents are directed to the school website Subject Choice page for information on choosing subjects (see link <https://www.stvincentsd11.ie/senior-options>).

Senior Options

In third year, students must decide whether to do TY or Leaving Cert. Any student moving from 3rd year to 5th year will consult with the Guidance Dept. and parents may be consulted too. The guidance counsellor prepares talks for both students and parents in February each year to discuss Senior Options. Students and parents choose options by filling out a google form on the school website (see link <https://www.stvincentsd11.ie/senior-options>). If students decide to change their mind throughout the year they may be referred to the guidance counsellor.

In TY, students must decide whether they want to do LCA or LCE. This decision is made in consultation with the Guidance Dept., AEN team, management, parents and students. If the student/parent chooses an option that the school believes is not suitable for the student a meeting will be called to advise parents and students of our concerns. Students and parents choose options by filling out a google form on the school website (see link <https://www.stvincentsd11.ie/senior-options>). If students decide to change their mind throughout the year they may be referred to the guidance counsellor.

Change of Level

Students may be referred to the guidance counsellor if they wish to change levels in their subject. The guidance counsellor offers them advice and highlights benefits/complications of level changes. Teachers, parents and management are also consulted in the process. It is always best practice for all parties involved to reach a mutual agreement. Students may be offered other supports prior to level changes such as grinds/tuition services.

School Trips/Open days

The Guidance Dept. arrange many trips in the school year as part of the co-curricular programme (see section 2.2). Information regarding trips is communicated to parents via text message and letter home. Permission slips must be returned. Student general get public transport to events but on occasion a coach may be booked. If parents have any concerns they are provided with the guidance

counsellors' contact details. If an external agency is involved, parents may have to sign a permission slip/health and safety form for said agency.

Open days are encouraged in 6th year and are highlighted on the school website, Reach+ accounts, google classroom and the Guidance noticeboard. 6th years are always encouraged to attend Open Days on the weekend if possible. If essential students can be granted permission by management to attend an Open Day mid-week but this will be limited.

In 6th year students learn how to plan for an Open Day in career class and are provided with the materials to do so. Students are also encouraged to log their experience of the Open Day on their Reach+ portfolio.

All 6th Years and TY students attend the DCU Open Days with the Guidance Counsellor annually.

All 6th Years attend Higher Options and World Skills with the Guidance Counsellor annually (LCA students only attend Worldskills).

All school trips must be agreed with management, logged on the school calendar and communicated to the whole staff via the noticeboard and/or email.

Guest Speakers

The Guidance Dept. invite guest speakers to the school as part of the co-curricular programme (see section 2.2). Guest speakers include HEI, FET, Apprenticeship reps, past pupils, local businesses, mental health professionals etc. Guest speakers are used to inspire and motivate students in their future planning.

All guest speakers must be agreed with management, logged on the school calendar and communicated to the whole staff via the noticeboard and/or email.

Study Skills

Study Skills was established as a Whole School initiative in 2019 and was rolled out from 2020-present. The guidance counsellor trained in SuperGeneration's Study Skills course and provided in house CPD to all staff members. A shared folder was created for staff with all the resources needed to embed Study Skills in day-to-day practice.

1st Years are introduced to study skills in the Career Guidance module and are prepped for Christmas and Summer exams through their Wellbeing classes.

2nd Years are taught how to study in each individual subject by their subject teachers and the guidance counsellor will remind teachers to do this at important times such as before exams.

3rd Years

Tracking

The Guidance Counsellor uses Athena Tracking system to track students' performances and establish which students are performing above/below their ability level. This is particularly useful for 3rd and 6th year students. Class teachers are encouraged to put target grades into Athena and the Tracking coordinator works with the guidance counsellor to establish target groups and put interventions in place.

Psychometric Testing

All guidance counsellors are trained in psychometric testing. The AEN team currently administers the psychometric tests to students at different intervals. All incoming first years sit a CAT4 in March prior to entering the school. All first year students sit GL assessment literacy (NGRT) and numeracy (PTM) tests in September. Some students may continue to do annual literacy/numeracy tests if interventions are put in place to improve their literacy/numeracy skills. All results are shared with the Guidance Dept. and used when necessary. Examples would be when looking at target groups, analysing tracking, applying for RACE or completing DARE forms.

The AEN team stores this data. Student SAS scores are uploaded onto the class/student profiles for teachers to review. The Guidance Dept. does not give feedback or share this information with students. The Guidance Dept. no longer administer DATS or aptitude tests.

Additional Procedures

There are many additional guidance-related procedures which are outlined in previous and subsequent sections. These include:

- Consultation with parents, school staff and students (Current, future and past).
- Feedback – giving feedback to school management and staff on the needs of individual students, year groups and the school as an organisation
- Networking – establishing links with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance guidance work with students.
- Promoting change – assisting curricular development in school.
- Placement – work experience, work shadowing and preparing students for employment.
- Follow up – following up former students regarding progression routes and destinations.
- Continuous Professional Development
- Membership of the IGC
- Participation in Professional Supervision
- Record Keeping
- Confidentiality
- Making Appointments/referrals

- Respect of Privacy/GDPR
- Referrals to external agencies
- Guidance Counselling Appointments
- CAO/HEAR/DARE/SUSI applications
- Organising annual events (CAW, Subject Choice, Parent Nights, Career Fairs).

Section 6 - World of Work

Work experience is an invaluable learning experience for students in their vocational search. Work experience influences decisions students make regarding subject choice, course choice and career pathways. Work experience also builds transferable skills, self-esteem, motivation and confidence. This is why all TY and LCA students will engage in work experience as part of their programmes.

6.1 TY Work Experience

All TY students must complete 20 days of work experience as part of their programme. This is mandatory. Students will do two consecutive weeks in October and two consecutive weeks in February.

Students are encouraged to find two separate work placements, however, if this is not possible they may do their full 20 days in the same placement.

Students are encouraged to look into placements in sectors of interest to them and they work on this with their guidance counsellor.

Work Experience Procedures

The TY coordinator oversees the organisation of the TY work placements. It is the guidance counsellor's role to help find suitable placements for the individual students' interests.

The TY coordinator will send forms home to parents to fill out the details of the placement. These details are stored on the REACH+ profile and entered by the guidance counsellor. The TY coordinator keeps a log of all previous placements and provides students with the contact details if they are struggling to secure their own placement.

The guidance counsellor also makes any available work placements known to students. Students are shown how to look for national placement schemes on REACH+ profile. They are also shown how to search for local businesses on Golden Pages.

If a student cannot find a placement the school will endeavour to do all they can to assist.

A spreadsheet is created by the TY coordinator with the details of each student's placement and shared with TY teachers.

Diary

Students report on their placement at three separate stages: Before the placement, during the placement and after the placement.

A report is written by the students on their REACH+ profile. They fill in the 'before' section with their guidance counsellor prior to starting placement. They fill in the 'during' section each evening which is a reflective piece. Finally, they fill in the 'after' section with the guidance counsellor on their return to school.

This Work Experience Diary is uploaded onto their website and is part of their overall assessment.

Reporting/Assessment

Each TY teacher is assigned a group of students to report on. The teacher will ring the placement each week and ask how the student is performing. They fill in the details on the spreadsheet log and the coordinator will review them.

This feedback is given back to students and parents. Student's must also report on their experience using the diary. They will be required to speak about their work experience during the Christmas and Summer presentations and this will go towards their final grades.

6.2 LCA Work Experience

All LCA students must engage in continuous work experience as part of their programme. This is mandatory. Students will attend work experience every Friday for the duration of the 2 year programme.

Students are encouraged to find two separate work placements, however, if this is not possible they may do their full 2 years in the same placement.

Students are encouraged to look into placements in sectors of interest to them and they work on this with their guidance counsellor and the LCA tutor.

Work Experience Procedures

The LCA coordinator & tutor oversees the organisation of the LCA work placements. It is the guidance counsellor's role to help find suitable placements for the individual students' interests.

The LCA coordinator will send forms home to parents to fill out the details of the placement and they will store this documentation. The TY coordinator keeps a log of all previous placements and provides students with the contact details if they are struggling to secure their own placement.

The guidance counsellor also makes any available work placements known to students. Students are shown how to look for national placement schemes on REACH+ profile. They are also shown how to search for local businesses on Golden Pages.

If a student cannot find a placement the school will endeavour to do all they can to assist.

A spreadsheet is created by the LCA coordinator with the details of each student's placement and shared with LCA teachers.

Diary

Students report on their placement weekly by keeping a diary and as part of their VPG modules (Work Experience 1,2,3,4).

A report is written by the students on their editable PDF workbooks from Classroom Guidance. These workbooks are filled in in VPG class weekly and the VPG teacher checks on the students performance and experiences.

This Work Experience Workbook is uploaded onto their classroom and is part of their key assignments.

Reporting/Assessment

The LCA coordinator and tutor keep regular checks on the students' work placement. They will call the placement at regular intervals to check on the students' progress. This feedback is given back to students and parents at meetings.

As part of VPG, the work experience module will be assessed. The booklets containing key assignments will be completed on googleclassroom and stored by the VPG teacher.

6.3 External Work Experience Links

The TY/LCA coordinator will continually acquire links in the community to provide an array of varied work experience opportunities. The guidance counsellor also has links with the various organisations mentioned in section 3.4 who provide a variety of work experience opportunities to students.

DCU

DCU access provides annual work experience to St. Vincent's. The affiliated companies are Arthur Cox Law Firm, Google, Beaumont Hospital. DCU also provides internal work placements.

HEI

Many HEI's provide work placements and training for TY students. The guidance counsellor is on the mailing list for these opportunities. Such experiences include RCSI Mini Med.

REACH+

Reach+ also has a database of national TY/LCA work placements which students can search. Students search by sector of interest.

Local Businesses

Many local businesses are linked in with the TY/LCA coordinator and offer placements annually.

Section 7 - Improvement Planning

7.1 Target Initiatives

St Vincent's is in the final year of their 3 year improvement plan. Listed below are the initiatives from 2020-2023.

The Guidance Initiatives for 2020-23 have been developed in collaboration with staff, students and parents.

The initiatives are set based on the individual needs of our students as identified by members of the school community and the learning objectives are created based on this.

In order to target areas in need of improvement, management and the guidance counsellors attended full day CPD in Wholeschool Guidance Planning (NCGE 2019).

Next, parents and students (one group from senior cycle and one group from junior cycle) were surveyed on the guidance procedure and asked about areas they would like to see improved.

School staff received CPD on Wholeschool Guidance Planning in-house with the Guidance Coordinator. They were also surveyed and asked to highlight target areas for improvement in line with the NCGE Wholeschool Framework.

Based on the feedback from all members of the community, the Guidance Team chose four priority initiatives to work on over the next three years.

Priority Initiatives 2020-23:

1. Junior Cycle Guidance
2. Study Skills
3. Whole School Guidance Planning
4. Improve Progression Rates to Higher Education (DEIS)

Junior Cycle Guidance

During the NCGE CPD on Wholeschool Guidance, both management and Guidance staff identified a vast difference between the guidance allocation for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Guidance. This difference was also identified by the staff and students in the survey conducted after the CPD. It is now the Guidance Dept.'s target to increase the guidance allocation in Junior Cycle through the Wellbeing Programme.

Target Plan:

Year 1 (2020/21) - All First Year Students will receive 6 hours of Guidance Counselling through the Wellbeing Rotation.

Year 2 (2021/22) - All First Year and Second Year Students will receive 6 hours of Guidance Counselling through the Wellbeing Rotation.

Year 3 (2022/23) - All Junior Cycle Students will receive 6 hours of Guidance Counselling through the Wellbeing Rotation.

Actions Taken by the Guidance Dept (2020/21):

- 1st Year students (3 class groups) will receive 1 58 minute class per week of Guidance (as part of a 4 module wellbeing programme delivered on a 8 week rotation basis).
- The Guidance Counsellor will deliver an 8 week Junior Guidance programme targeted at transitioning from primary to post primary school.
- Resources used are from the NGCE and the Guidance Counsellor.

Monitoring this target:

- Feedback and observations from tutors, teachers and students will be collected at the end of each 8 week rotation.

- The Wellbeing Committee will meet at least three times in the year to monitor and update the initiative accordingly.
- The Wellbeing Committee will make decisions in April 2021 about how to improve and continue implementing this initiative for the following academic year.

Evaluating this target:

- We should see all 1st year students engaging in at least 6 hours of Guidance over the course of the academic year.
- Improved ability to cope with the transition process.
- Improved resilience.
- Smart goal planning for the future
- Confidence in themselves as learners and their ability to reach potential
- Less one-to-one appointments with first years regarding transitioning/resilience issues.
- More knowledge on educational/vocational pathways.

Study Skills

Through student tracking (using Athena), both the guidance dept and the exam coordinator identified issues with student attainment in all year groups. Evidence was gathered by inputting CAT 4 results and all official term results into the Athena database and identifying the number of students who are underperforming. We realised that a significant number of students were underachieving. We then surveyed students and staff to attain information about their study performance and whether this may be a reason for poor attainment in the school. Parents were also surveyed regarding the time students spend at home studying and an overwhelming percentage said they noticed their children spending significantly less time studying than would be expected. The evidence collected from parents, staff and students suggested a need for a whole-school study skills initiative.

Target Plan:

Year 1 (2020/21) - All first year students do a Study Skills Programme through the Wellbeing Rotation. All staff will receive in-house CPD on wholeschool study skills and learning styles. All other years will receive a Study Skills session administered by the Guidance Counsellor. Open Supervised Study to 3rd, 5th and 6th Year Students.

Year 2 (2021/22) - All first and second year students do a Study Skills Programme through the Wellbeing Rotation. All new staff will receive in-house CPD on wholeschool study skills. All first years

will know their learning style and will have a sticker in their journal to identify this. All other years will receive a Study Skills session administered by the Guidance Counsellor. Open Supervised Study to 3rd, 5th and 6th Year Students.

Year 3 (2022/23) - All Junior Cycle students do a Study Skills Programme through the Wellbeing Rotation. All new staff will receive in-house CPD on wholeschool study skills. All Senior Cycle students will receive a Study Skills session administered by the Guidance Counsellor. Open Supervised Study to 3rd, 5th and 6th Year Students.

Actions Taken by the Guidance Dept (2020/21):

- 1st years (3 class groups) will receive one 58 minute Study Skills class per week (as part of a 4 short module Wellbeing Programme rotated on a 8 week basis).
- 2nd/3rd years won't have a timetabled class; however, the guidance counsellor and subject teachers will embed Study Skills in practice daily.
- TY classes will receive Tutor Time Study Skills sessions (12min classes x5 per week) as well as receive a Study Skills module in Career Class.
- 5th/6th years will receive Tutor Time Study Skills sessions (12min classes x5 per week). Guidance counsellors and subject teachers will embed practice daily. 5th years will receive a Study Skills/Goal Setting session before the final term. Goal Setting Packs will be sent home to 5th year parents over Easter. 6th year students will receive a Study Skills/Study Performance Session in Career Class.
- Resources used for Study Skills this year will be Supergeneration's "Learning to Learn Programme", Tutor Study Booklets, Parents Booklets, Staff CPD and Study Skills Posters in all classrooms.

Monitoring this target:

- Feedback from students and staff at the end of study sessions regarding the benefits/improvements.
- Tracking students' attainment progress using Athena.
- The Care Team will discuss Study Skills at least three times a year to discuss effectiveness and come up with new strategies for implementation.
- The Care Team will meet at the end of the academic year to create a plan for this initiative and how it will roll out in the following academic year.

Evaluating this target:

- There should be an improvement in at least some students' attainment which can be identified on Athena.
- Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert Attainment should improve.
- Students will be more familiar with effective study practice.
- Students will know how to evaluate their practice and make an improvement plan.
- Senior students will be aware of their long and short term goals and have strategies to reach them.
- Students should know their individual learning styles.
- Students will be more confident in their ability.

Whole School Guidance Planning

In order to follow the NCGE Wholeschool Guidance Framework, the Guidance Coordinator will create, implement and review a new Whole School Guidance Plan. This new plan will ensure students will have an age-appropriate understanding of the concept of lifelong learning, and are well disposed to continuing education and training due to the culture in the school. This task will be carried out by all members of staff and coordinated by the Guidance Counsellor.

Target Plan:

Year 1 (2020/21) - The Guidance Counsellor will create The Whole School Guidance Plan which will include the continuum of support model as well as the three areas of learning and competencies. All subject departments will have a Guidance Section in their plans.

Year 2 (2021/22) - The Whole School Guidance Plan will be complete and ratified by the Board of Management as will a Confidentiality Policy. Junior Cycle guidance will expand to include 1st and 2nd year programmes.

Year 3 (2022/23) - The Whole School Guidance Plan will be reviewed using the SSE model and target areas will be identified using the LAOS approach. Junior Cycle guidance will expand to include all years in a guidance programme.

Actions Taken by the Guidance Dept (2020/21):

- GC will attend all NCGE CPD workshops on Whole School Guidance Planning.
- GC coordinator will address staff in a meeting to inform them of the new framework and guide them in creating the guidance section in their subject plans.

- Gather feedback from staff prior to creating the new plan with regards to the continuum of support and the areas of learning and competencies.
- GC will use the information gathered from staff to plan and implement new initiatives.
- GC coordinator will begin writing up a new Whole School Plan.

Monitoring this target:

- Check-in with Subject Dept. meetings to ensure Guidance is included in plans.
- GC coordinator will stick to the checklist for creating and implementing the new plan.
- The Guidance Team will meet at least three times this year to discuss the creation of a new plan.
- The Guidance Team will meet at the end of the year to approve the plan before putting it to the BOM for ratification.
- DEIS committees meet three times a year to monitor and evaluate areas of attainment and progression which should be improving as a result of whole school guidance.

Evaluating this target:

- The Whole School Guidance plan should be ready at the end of the academic year for ratification.
- All subject dept. Plans should contain a Guidance section.
- Progression and attainment targets should have improved by the next academic year.

7.2 SSE Model Annual Review

As part of a Whole School approach to Guidance in our school, we decided to identify 3 areas of improvement as part of a whole staff in May 2019. We established from staff feedback 3 key areas to focus on implementing over the next 3 years and to review the targets in May 2023.

All three targets were included in the Guidance Plan from September 2019. We gathered feedback from staff and exiting students in 2019. Based on this the Guidance Dept and school management analysed the data and implemented actions each year to help reach the targets.

In 2021 a Guidance Team was established to monitor the progress of the actions and evaluate the effectiveness of the targets. It was also important for the team to gather data on an ongoing basis and to make adjustments to the actions depending on their effectiveness. Data gathered in 2021 included surveys from both Junior and Senior Cycle parents and students on the current Guidance provisions.

2023 Annual Review

The Focus of this Evaluation

We undertook self-evaluation of Guidance Targets during the period 2020-2023. We evaluated the following targets:

1. Junior Cycle Guidance
2. Study Skills
3. Whole School Guidance Planning
4. Improve Progression Rates to Higher Education (DEIS)

Findings of this evaluation

This is effective / very effective practice in our school:

- 1st Year Guidance Programme
- Awareness of Study Skills
- Whole School Guidance Planning

This is how we know:

- 1st Year Guidance Programme - based on student feedback both prior to the 1st year guidance programme and after the programme it is clear that the effect has been positive on them. Observations with Guidance Counsellor shows a decrease in 1:1 appointments in 1st year and also less of a need for target 2 intervention groups in first year.
- Increased awareness of Study Skills in the school - Based on student surveys, the vast majority of students state that their teachers have spoken to them about studying their subjects. There is an increase in confidence in creating study timetables, organising study topics etc. Senior Cycle grades improved in the Leaving Certificate over the past 3 years.
- Completed Whole School Guidance Planning - All sections of the Whole School Guidance Plan have been written and reviewed by the Guidance Committee in accordance with NCGE guidelines. All subject departments have a Guidance section in their plans. We are reaching our DEIS progression target (There will be an increase in the proportion of students who proceed to higher education on completion of senior cycle from 46% (achieved 2019) to 50%. Year 1 – 46% to 47% Year 2 47% - 48% Year 3 48% to 50%. - Current statistic for 2022 is 52%).

This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further: (Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.)

- Embed timetabled career guidance classes for all years groups
- Study Skills - Workshop for 3rd & 6th years - study journals

Actions to implement:

- Train all teachers in using the Study Skills model
- Provide all teachers with a folder of resources
- Hire Super Generation to provide workshops to 3rd & 6th years
- Teach Study Skills in class as part of the 3rd year and 6th year guidance programme.
- Remind staff at regular intervals to explicitly teach the study skills model
- Guidance Counsellor timetabled to teach careers to 1st, TY, 5th & 6th years
- Guidance Counsellor will train teachers to provide guidance in 2nd, 3rd year and in tutor time.

The Guidance Committee, Guidance Dept and Management will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan.

Measuring the effectiveness of the actions:

- Survey teachers/students/staff
- Analyse data in Guidance Committee Meetings

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:

- The progress made, and adjustments made, and when
- Achievement of targets (original and modified), and when