

Coachford College

Whole School Guidance Plan



Review Dates

Staff	January 2023	Reviewed
BOM	February 2023	Ratified
Staff	April 2026	Reviewed
BOM	April 2026	

Foreword

Coachford College's Whole School Guidance Plan was reviewed and evaluated in 2022/23 to reflect the many changes and challenges that now exist in our College in providing for and managing the emotional, mental and physical needs of our students. At the heart of the Guidance Plan is a deep

commitment to each student's well being. The revised plan is now represented in seven distinct strands which combine to capture the range of supports that are offered to students at Coachford College.

Strand 1: The Guidance & Counselling Department.

Strand 2: The Learning Support Department.

Strand 3: Well being & Life Skills Programmes (SHPE & RSE)

Strand 4: Physical Health

Strand 5: Inclusion & Diversity

Strand 6: Student Leadership

Strand 7: Chaplaincy.

A Guidance Plan

The Whole School Guidance Plan requires regular evaluation in order to meet the needs of our students. The Plan will receive an annual review and the Strands will undergo constant appraisals.

Introduction

Coachford College was established in 1953 and is a co-educational, multi-denominational post primary school and is run under the auspices of Cork Education and Training Board. The school caters for all ranges of abilities, embracing all social groupings, offering the widest possible range of subjects.

The Whole School Guidance Plan is student-centred in its approach. The promotion and enhancement of self-esteem, life-skills and the development of potential – academic, personal, social and emotional – leading to a greater personal autonomy for all students are its central goals. All staff members have a vital role to play in student care and therefore have a role to play in the delivery of the Whole School Guidance Programme.

This plan forms part of the Whole School Plan, it is not a rigid template and it will be evaluated, reviewed and updated routinely.

Definitions

Guidance in school refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked, areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance.

Counselling offered within a guidance context is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crises. Counselling has as its objective the empowerment of students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, address behavioural issues, develop coping strategies and resolve difficulties they may be experiencing. Counselling may include personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling or combinations of these. In line with Information Note 0001/2024 and Circular 0001/2025, guidance is defined as a whole-school, developmental range of learning experiences enabling students to develop self-management skills for informed personal, educational and career decision-making.

Requirements on Schools

This plan is developed in accordance with Circular 0001/2025 and Information Note 0001/2024, which set out the current national policy requirements for Whole-School Guidance in post-primary schools. Guidance is a statutory requirement for schools under Section 9 (c) of the Education Act 1998:

‘to ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices’.

Circular 0001/2025 now provides the centralised and updated national requirements for implementing this statutory duty in all post-primary schools.

Scope

This plan applies to the entire community of Coachford College. Its interventions and support apply to junior, senior, minority, special educational, further education or personal needs etc. of all students as they progress through their second-level education.

Relationship to Mission Statement

The school Guidance Plan supports the values of the school outlined in its Mission Statement:

We in Coachford College have a vision of the type of school we would like. "We are a Community, together we share mutual respect in a positive environment and we develop individual potential in all fields".

While parents are the primary educators of their children, our staff members, who act in loco parentis, are a valuable resource and every effort is made to ensure that we have a dedicated and committed staff and good student – staff relationships.

Our school is an integral part of our local community and in addition to providing the best possible education for our young people and preparing them for later life, our school should serve as a resource for and enriches our community.

We do everything to assist our pupils to take responsibility for themselves and their actions and help them to appreciate and care for the world in which we live.

Rationale

- Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) states that a school *shall use its available resources to... (c) Ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.*
- Circular Letter PPT 009/2012 from the Department of Education and Skills points out that: It is established policy that guidance is a whole school activity and under existing arrangements each school develops collaboratively a school guidance plan as a means of supporting the needs of its students.
- The School development Planning Initiative (SDPI) document Planning the School Guidance Programme (2004) specifies that schools are expected to develop a guidance plan.
- "NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework 2017" will support schools in the planning and provision of a whole school approach to guidance.
- Guidance-related learning is identified in the *Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines* as one of the main pillars of a school's Wellbeing programme (NCCA, 2017).

Guidance is a whole school activity and our approach is collaboratively developed. This collaboration involves a variety of approaches such as feedback from inspection reports and parental and student attitudinal surveys. This whole School activity is undertaken as a means of supporting the needs of students. As a School we believe it is important that all members of staff fully recognise and ensure that guidance permeates every aspect of school life.

This Guidance plan has evolved for the purpose of providing guidance to students. It outlines the school's approach to guidance generally and explains how students are supported and assisted in making choices and successful transitions in the personal and social, educational and career areas. It gives formal structure to a whole-school approach to this provision. Additionally, it informs parents, students and teachers that guidance will be delivered in an integrated and proactive way. The guidance plan also distinguishes between the competencies available within the school to support a student and where deemed necessary referral to outside agencies.

Aims and Objectives

The Whole School Guidance Plan aims to:

- Set out the learning experiences and activities of the guidance programme
- Reflect the needs of both Junior and Senior Cycle students
- Achieve a balance in the provision of personal/social, educational and career guidance offered to students

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

- To clarify educational, social and career goals
- To address personal issues
- To identify and explore opportunities
- To grow in independence and take responsibility for themselves
- To make informed choices about their lives and follow through on these choices
- To support the development of every student
- To acknowledge and support each person's role in the school community
- To provide an environment where each individual can develop self-esteem and a sense of personal responsibility
- To provide an environment where each individual can develop a place in society and a responsibility to society
- To nurture teaching and learning so that each individual can reach his or her full potential
- To monitor the well-being of all students
- To apply best practice in the protection of students and the promotion of their welfare, within the resources available in accordance with DES and School Child Protection Policy
- To work effectively with statutory authorities and outside agencies as and when required
- To ensure that any allegations of abuse are dealt with justly and promptly in accordance with the Children First Guidelines 2017

The Model of Provision for Whole School Guidance Programme

A continuum of support

A continuum of support model is applied to the Coachford College guidance programme. In applying the continuum, our whole school guidance programme aims to meet the needs of students along a varied range, from a whole school approach to group and individualised approaches. The continuum model can be applied as follows:

A) Guidance For All – provided to all students to support personal and social, educational, and career development, and students making transitions (incoming first years, junior cycle to senior cycle and from senior cycle into apprenticeships, FET, HE and employment). The guidance counsellor as the specialist has a key role to play in coordinating the planning and delivery of the whole school guidance programme and in the provision of guidance to students. A whole school approach is employed in delivering the learning and teaching activities of the school guidance programme which include, career education programmes, SPHE and Wellbeing in Junior Cycle, guidance modules and work experience/placement provided as part of senior cycle programmes (TY, and LCVP).

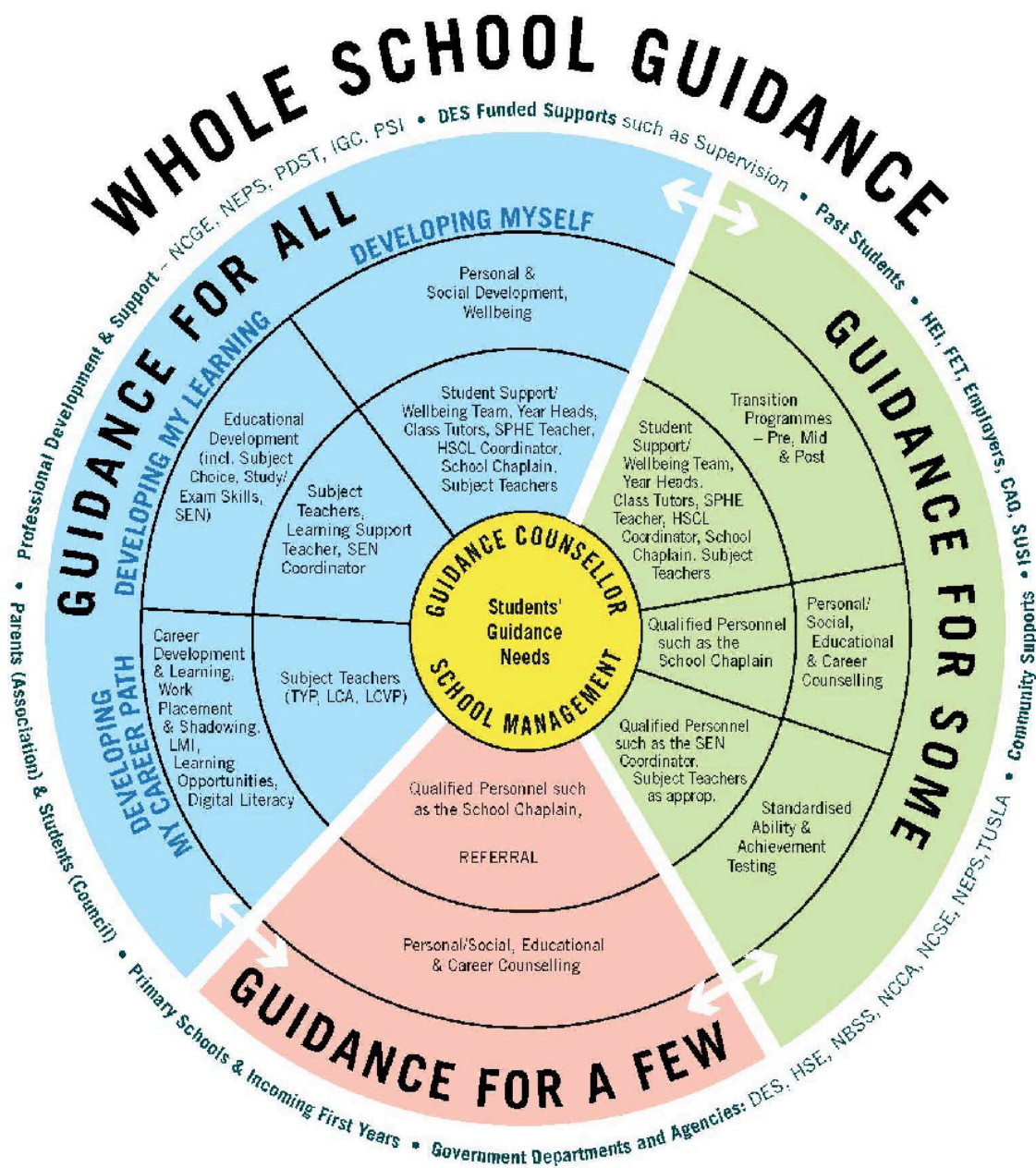
B) Guidance For Some – provided to specific groups of students to support personal & social, educational and career development and transition making. Such groups of students will typically include, for example, students in senior cycle, especially 6th year, who will benefit from group and one-to-one guidance counselling to support educational and career decision making, and students who are making transitions. Transition points include, primary school into first year of post-primary education, junior cycle to senior cycle, and school to higher/further education and training, apprenticeships and employment. Some students may require additional and more intensive support in making transitions. Group/one-to-one guidance counselling will require the expertise of specialist school staff, such as the guidance counsellor working in collaboration with the pastoral care team, SPHE teacher, SEN team, year heads, class tutors and the school Chaplain.

C) Guidance for a Few - Students may require support in meeting their developmental needs and when they experience personal crises. Some students may also require more intensive support as

they make transitions (including transitions for Early School Leavers (ESL) and to education centres such as Youthreach) and important decisions during their time in post-primary schools. This support will require the expertise of specialised school staff with the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to respond to the needs of these students and will involve the guidance counsellor, and other school staff who have been trained in meeting the needs of vulnerable students and those who may have additional needs. In the event that the student requires more intensive support, referral to external agencies and support should be employed. In the event of a protracted referral the guidance counsellor/ staff member may need to provide continued support to the student

Figure 1 below (courtesy of NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework, Page 14) shows the continuum of support model on which our School approach to guidance is offered. The guidance counsellor in collaboration with school management and staff, and external organisations/personnel, deliver a wide range of activities and learning to support students' personal & social, educational and career development. The guidance counsellor as the specialist plays a central role in the design and delivery of the whole school guidance programme.

Figure 1



Areas of Learning and Competences

Guidance-related learning starts in early childhood education and continues through students' primary and post primary education. As part of this holistic development, students in Coachford College, are exposed to 3 areas of guidance-related learning so as to allow them to develop in 8 areas of competence (Figure 2 below courtesy of NCGE: *A Whole School Guidance Framework*, Page 16). These areas of learning aim to build on the learning that students will have experienced during their years in primary education.



Outcomes are presented as indicative competences in this plan relating to the three areas of learning. These outcomes relate to the development of self-awareness and self-knowledge, knowledge of learning and work opportunities, and applying this knowledge to make effective transitions and decision making. These competencies are built upon in a variety of School programmes such as:

Junior Cycle - The three areas of learning and associated competences are linked with the Principles underpinning the Framework for Junior Cycle, a number of the Framework Statements of Learning and Key Skills. The whole school guidance programme is linked to Key Skills such as Managing Myself, Managing Information & Thinking, Staying Well, Communicating and Working with Others. The guidance counsellor has a role in planning and coordinating guidance-related- learning associated (Guidance for All) with the relevant Key Skills and in providing more intensive interventions to those students who need it through Guidance for Some and A Few approaches.

Wellbeing - SPHE and guidance related learning are two of the main pillars of Wellbeing. Wellbeing is linked to the Staying Well key skill of the Framework for Junior Cycle. The eight competences can be linked with five of the six indicators of Wellbeing – Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware. The guidance counsellor has an important role in supporting and planning these Guidance modules with the SPHE teachers who deliver these modules.

Senior Cycle - At senior cycle (including LC, LCVP & TY) the RSE curriculum and Guidance Programmes can be used to plan learning outcomes in Developing Myself for students. All school staff involved in these programmes work together to ensure a consistent approach is taken in supporting student achievement of the learning outcomes.

Whole School Overview

Guidance for all:

Guidance is a whole school activity used to describe the range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and the transitions based on these choices. The Guidance programme is the full range of activities through which the school addresses the needs of students. This incorporates three main yet interlinked areas as identified by the NCGE . These choices may be categorised into three separate but interlinked dimensions/areas:

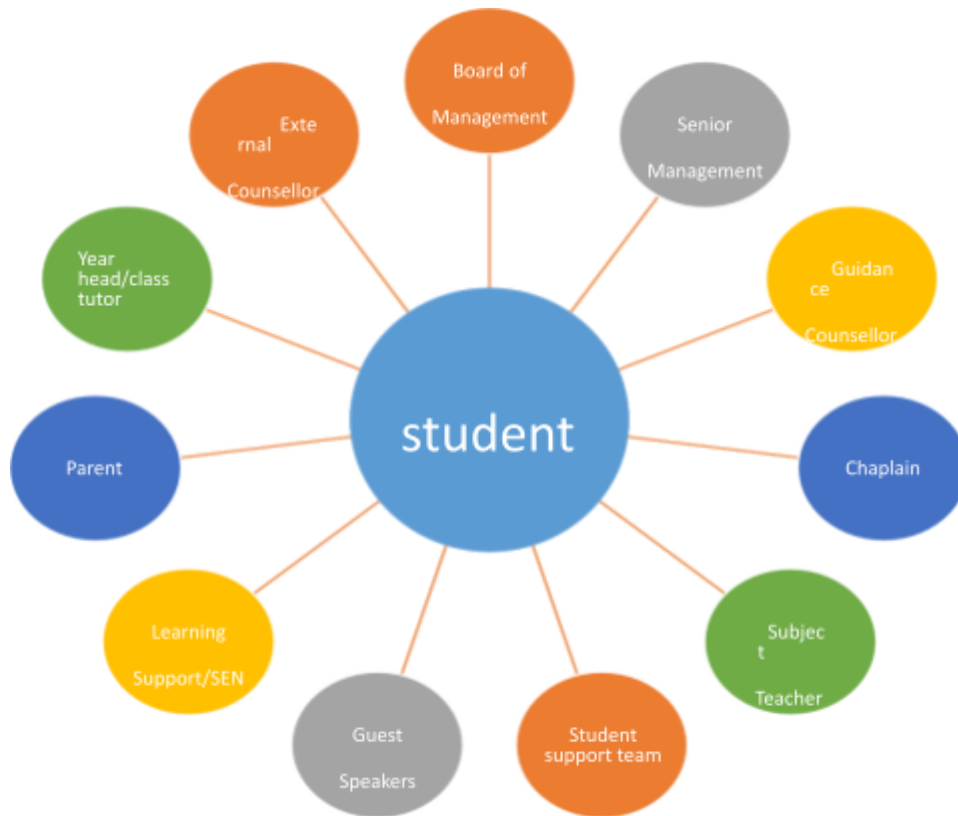
- A. **Developing myself:** Personal and Social
- B. **Developing my Learning:** Educational
- C. **Developing my Career Path:** Career

- A. **Developing myself** – Personal and Social development is largely delivered through the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme where it is timetabled at Junior Cycle and at Senior Cycle in R.E. It comprises the following modules: Belonging and Integrating, Self Management, Communication Skills, Physical Health, Friendship, Relationships and Sexuality, Emotional Health, Influences and Decisions, Substance Use and Personal Safety. Additional programmes include workshops and talks during the course of a school year e.g. Aware Mental Health workshops, Bystander anti bullying programme and Internet Safety talks. The Mentoring programme (buddy system) is a support system whereby trained TY students assist with the integration of new students into the school system. Every opportunity is used in Coachford College to develop the skills, potential and resilience of all students.
- B. **Developing my Learning** – Educational Guidance is developmental in nature and allows the student to take responsibility for their own learning and progress. In Coachford College, Education Guidance begins at the student’s entry in 1st year by empowering students in the area of subject choice following subject sampling and later at another key transition point – the end of 3rd year/TY where course/subject choices are made for senior cycle. Other areas of guidance include subject level selection, motivation and learning, study skills and examination skills, learning related problems and counselling for these learning difficulties, teacher consultations, psychometric testing and consulting parents about related matters.
- C. **Developing my career path-** Involves empowering students to recognise their talents and abilities which enable them to make informed choices and take responsibility for their own futures. Examples of areas covered:
- Developing an understanding of the world of work and life roles
 - Careers Information Management/ Employment Opportunity
 - Development of self-awareness
 - Post Leaving Certificate Choices/Pathways to Further Education/HEAR/DARE
 - Attendance at Career Events
 - Personal Vocational Guidance Interviews
 - Organisation of Career Talks/ Liaison with Business, 3rd Level – Personnel and Past Pupils
 - Decision Making Skills and Planning Skills
 - Job Search Skills/ Interviews
 - Using career related information and sources appropriately e.g. Reach +, Qualifax
 - Pathways of further education including third level course/career progression with CAO, PLC and apprenticeship applications to the fore.

Guidance: A Whole School Activity – Roles and Responsibilities

Guidance is not provided exclusively by any one individual or group. It is a holistic process that benefits from the synergy of many working together with a shared vision towards a common goal. Whole School Guidance Planning enables our School to identify, prioritise and respond to the guidance needs of students using the resources available. When one considers the three dimensions of guidance (personal, educational and career), all members of the teaching staff are in some way involved in providing guidance to students. However it is the responsibility of the Guidance

Counsellor to coordinate the guidance programme under the direction of senior management. A Whole School Approach thus ensures that our school maximises its resources for guidance through the identification of roles and responsibilities for school management and staff in the provision of appropriate guidance to students. The main roles and responsibilities within our School are:



(a) Board of Management

The Board of Management has a responsibility to ensure that the provision and practice of guidance in the school is of the highest possible standard. The Board of Management manages the school in accordance with the Education Act (1998). Each school is required to comply with the Education Act (1998) and provide students with "access to appropriate guidance".

(b) Senior Leadership Team

The Principal leads and manages the school, and exercises supervision over the teaching and non-teaching staff. The Deputy Principals are in charge of the school in the absence of the Principal. In the absence of the Principal and Deputy Principals, an Assistant Principal is placed in charge of the school. The Senior Leadership Team also has a responsibility to ensure that Whole School Guidance is of the highest possible standard. This includes managing the process of guidance planning in cooperation with the guidance counsellor, school staff and other school partners.

(c) Guidance Counsellor

Guidance Counsellors because of their specialist training have a professional role in each of the main areas of guidance: personal and social, educational, and career. Within personal and social, their role for example may involve publicising to the students the work of the Guidance Counsellor and the Guidance Counsellor’s availability to individual students for an appointment at any time (within the framework of guidance hours available). Their educational role involves many aspects such as assisting and collaborating with the AEN team. Their career role may involve working with all

students in 3rd Year and Transition Year prior to them choosing their subjects for Senior Cycle. In addition the Guidance Counsellor has a key role in collaborating with the Senior Leadership Team in the development and review of the school Guidance Plan and the integration of Guidance into the curriculum. The Guidance Counsellor works collaboratively with all staff members. The Guidance Counsellor has strong links with outside supportive agencies and is a member of the Student Support Team. The Guidance Counsellors as mandated persons are also well positioned, due to the nature of their work, to respond to child protection concerns.

(d) Student Support Team

The Student Support Team is made up of the Senior Leadership Team, Guidance Counsellors, Chaplain and an AEN team member. The Team meets weekly to review the current needs of students as well as planning for future needs. The Team strives to provide a response to students' needs by liaising with teachers and by inviting outside agencies to cover specific issues, as deemed necessary. This is a forum for sharing information and concerns in a safe and confidential setting. What is discussed at Student Support Team Meetings relating to individual cases is confidential to the team and any follow up required is decided upon and assigned to a member of the team.

(e) Chaplain

The Chaplain collaborates with all members of the school community and in particular with those who hold designated pastoral responsibilities relating to students, staff and members of the wider community connected to the school. The Chaplain meets regularly with the Guidance Counsellor, Principal and deputy Principal. The Chaplain actively engages with year heads and all members of the students support team and outside supportive agencies.

(f) AEN Coordinator

The AEN Coordinator directs the provision and application of resources for students with additional educational needs and/or specific learning difficulties. They liaise with the Principal, Deputy Principals and staff, parents/guardians and outside agencies. They apply for resources including resource hours, Special Needs Assistants and Assistive Technology. The Deputy Principals oversee timetables for students requiring learning support and other assistance. The AEN Coordinator and Deputy Principal liaise with Special Needs Assistants, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Year Heads, subject teachers and Principal.

(g) Other Support Staff

- **Class Teacher**

The class teacher takes a particular interest in the activities, progress and individual needs of the students in a class group. In addition, they are best placed to help students to be positive in their behaviour and work. The class teacher in their pastoral care capacity serves as a special link between the student support team and the students.

- **Year Head**

The Year Head has general responsibility for the welfare of a year group. The Year Head oversees the student's wellbeing, attendance, punctuality, academic performance and behaviour and liaises with the parents/guardians of the year group. The Year Head works closely with the subject teachers, class teachers, Guidance Counsellors, SEN, Student Support, Deputy Principals and Principal.

- **Guest Speakers**

Guest Speakers may be engaged by school personnel to support the three dimensions/areas of Guidance. Guest speakers are designed to bring their own unique experience, knowledge, expertise to the student, staff and parental body. Guest Speakers work in conjunction with existing school programmes/subjects/areas of Guidance so as to augment and support existing provision. To ensure compliance with our statutory obligations and safeguarding, we operate a system within Coachford College that ensures all visitors/volunteers requiring Garda Vetting are identified and processed accordingly, with a central register ready for presentation on request from relevant authorities. If we are bringing a visitor or volunteer to engage with our students in any form, a visitor notification form is completed and returned to the Deputy Principal at least 10 school days prior to the visit.

- **Parents/Guardians**

This Plan adopts the legal definition of parent as set down in the Education Act, 1998. The Plan recognizes that parents play a pivotal role in developing, promoting and supporting the growth of their child both at home and within the school. Parents play a vital role in shaping their children's attitude to school. A supportive home environment shapes attitudes that promote the holistic development of the child. It is important that parents are aware of and support this Plan together with other school policies and procedures. Parents are further encouraged to involve themselves in positive participation in school life in order to facilitate links between school and home. Parents can also participate in the guidance process through consultation with the guidance counsellor and other school staff.

- **Students**

This Plan seeks to attend to the welfare of every student and their right to participate in and benefit from education. It helps students to focus on their personal responsibility for their own behaviour and to experience the value of being a responsible and participatory member of Coachford College. Students have an important part to play in creating and sustaining a positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect that nurtures teaching and learning. The Student Council affords students an opportunity to voice their opinion and become involved in the daily life of their School. Wellbeing, SPHE, RE and CSPE cover many aspects of personal and social development. Here, students develop an awareness of their own needs and difficulties and come to know how to ask and who to ask for advice and help. Because Coachford College adopts a whole-school approach to Guidance, students are free to approach any member of staff with their concerns. Accordingly, a student may talk to a subject teacher, class teacher, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal and Principal as they see fit. Fellow students also have a part to play in supporting their peers in difficulty.

Current Whole School Guidance Programme and Provision

Time allocation - Individual, small group and class group support

Guidance and Counselling support is offered on an individual, small group or class group basis. The focus of counselling is on the personal/social, educational, and career issues, individually, in small groups or as part of timetabled class contact. The School counselling service provides a caring context for counselling, engages in advocacy where appropriate and supports young people in personal crises.

Individual Counselling is an interactive process to help the student to understand their personal reality in a safe, supportive environment and help them deal responsibly with their needs.

Group work is offered under the direction of the Guidance Counsellor. Depending on the context and the group this can be the most effective form of support for individual members, where students can learn that they are not alone in their experience and receive healing from one another. All group work will only take place where there is proper supervision and permission e.g. Post Traumatic Stress prevention following a critical incident.

Class group support is timetabled in nature under the supervision of the Guidance Counsellor and by the allocation of the Principal. The Guidance Counsellor is at all times sensitive to the developmental stages of the students.

Delivery of Guidance & Counselling (one-to-one, small group etc.)

The 2017 and 2018 Allocation Circulars state –

“The Minister requires schools to adjust their Guidance Plans to meet Action 9.1 in Action Plan for Education 2017, which states that the Guidance Plan should “include specified time allocation for guidance counsellors to be available for one-to-one guidance counselling and time allocation for the role in supporting the organisation and work of the Student Support Team”.

While Guidance is a whole-school activity, the central and critical role of the Guidance Counsellor is vital, particularly for the availability for one to one guidance and counselling. The latest model places responsibility on school leaders to use the guidance provision for the maximum benefit of students. Guidance at Junior Cycle in Coachford College is linked to SPHE and Wellbeing. All senior cycle groups have a dedicated weekly guidance class and junior cycle groups have a guidance input at different stages of the learning cycles.

Junior and Senior Cycles Guidance Programme

The School vision is to supply an effective and comprehensive Guidance service which enables our students to acquire knowledge and develop competencies for future careers, to broaden their horizons and to strive to be successful on their pathways in life. The programme aims to address the needs of all students within the school community. The whole school delivery in Guidance provision at Coachford College is best identified by the summarised charts below:

Strand 1 - The Guidance & Counselling Department

1.1 Legislative & Policy Framework Informing Guidance Provision

- Education Act 1998 – Section 9(c)
- DE Circular 0001/2025 – Guidance in Post-Primary Schools
- DE Information Note 0001/2024 – Whole School Guidance Definitions & Requirements
- DE Circulars 0084/2024 & 0001/2023 – Use of Assessment Instruments
- Information Note 0003/2024 – Storage/Transfer of Guidance Notes
- Transition Year Programme Statement (NCCA, 2024)
- NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework (2017)
- Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2017)
- NCGE School Guidance Handbook
- National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance (2024–2030)

1.2 The Guidance Counsellors Core Activities & Principles.

Personal Counselling/Group Counselling and Development

- Promotion of self-development and self-awareness
- Assertiveness
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Informed Decision Making
- Action Plans to achieve Objectives

Educational Guidance

- Interests & Abilities
- Study Skills & Examination Preparation
- Time Management
- Stress Management
- Subject Choices and Combinations
- Educational Links

Career Guidance

- Career Planning – routes and paths
- Careers and Occupations
- Open Days & Careers Events
- Third Level Colleges & PLC
- Curriculum Vitae
- Interview Skills
- Work Experience preparation and evaluation

The principles that guide these activities are:

- Guidance service is a whole school concern
- A confidential service within limitations and confidentiality
- Communication and collaboration with senior leaderships, subject teachers, tutors, year heads, pastoral care team, learning support, chaplain, higher education institutes, outside agencies and parents.
- Accessible and open

- On-going reviewing and evaluation
- Transparency and accountability

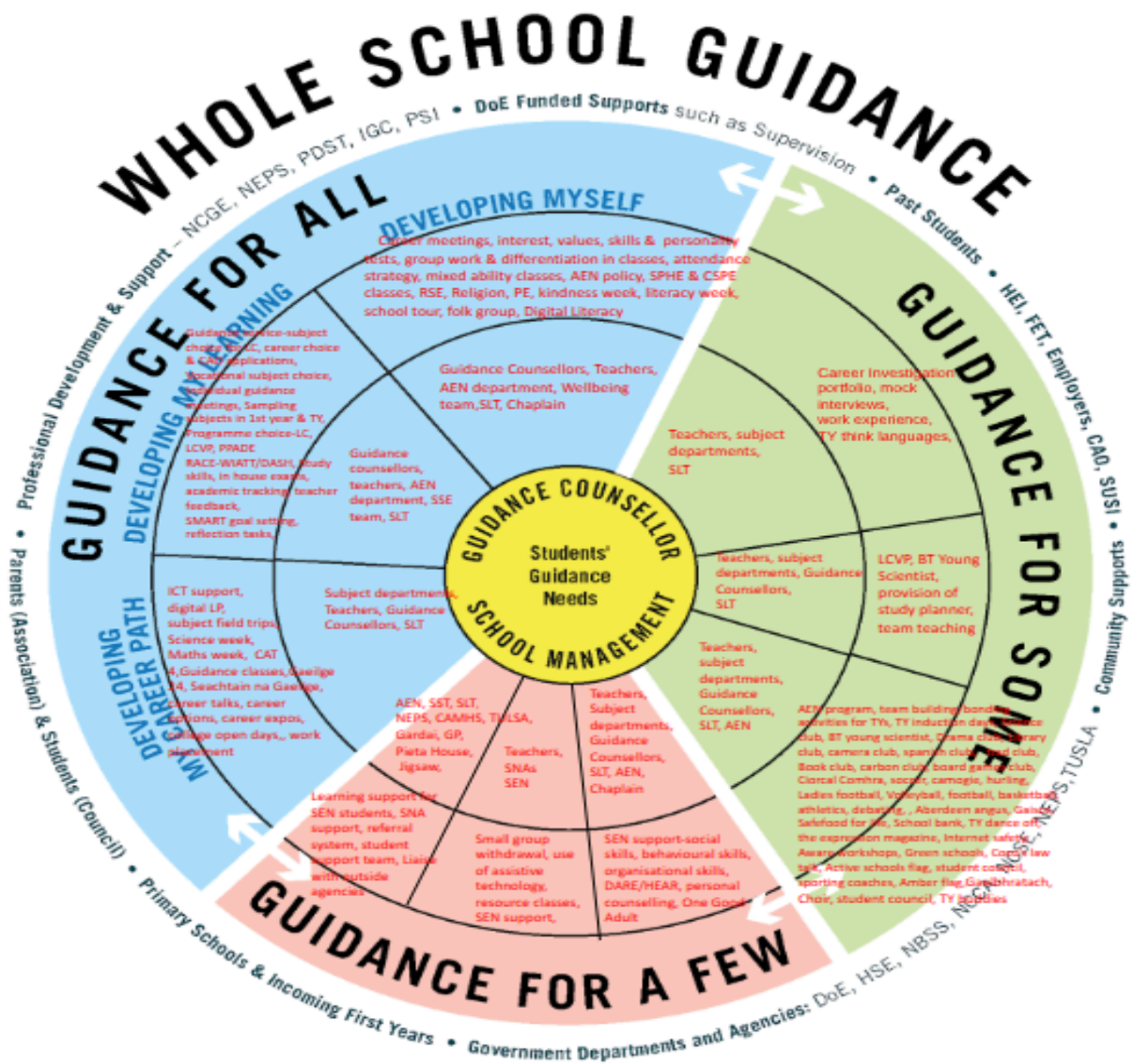
1.3 Role of Guidance Counsellor

The role of the Guidance Counsellor can be categorised into:

- Educational Guidance and Counselling
- Career Guidance and Counselling
- Personal Guidance and Counselling

NCGE Whole school Guidance Framework 2017 is being employed in Coachford College to support students' learning and development (NEPS, 2010) and mental health promotion (NEPS, 2013). This Whole School Guidance Programme is also informed by the Department of Education Circular 0001/2025, which sets out Whole-School Guidance as the contemporary model of practice in post-primary schools. In addition, Information Note 0001/2024 provides key definitions and expectations for Whole School Guidance provision.

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



Whole School Guidance Framework NCGE, 2017

The Guidance Team as the specialist has a key role to play in coordinating the planning and delivery of the Whole School Guidance Programme and in the provision of guidance to students. A whole school approach is employed in delivering the learning and teaching activities of the School Guidance Programme which include, career education programmes, SPHE and Wellbeing in Junior Cycle, guidance modules and work experience/placement provided as part of senior cycle programmes (TY and LCVP).

The Guidance Team in collaboration with school senior leadership, staff and external organisations/personnel, deliver a wide range of activities and learning to support students' personal & social, educational and career development. The Guidance Team as the specialists play a central role in the design and delivery of the Whole School Guidance Programme. It is acknowledged that the stakeholders involved in a Whole School Approach to guidance may vary across schools according to resources and needs.

1.4 Educational Guidance and Counselling

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

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

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

- Decision-making skills
- Goal-setting skills
- Motivational skills
- Study skills
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Advice on Subject Choices

1.5 Career Guidance and Counselling

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

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

1.6 Personal Guidance and Counselling

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

- Conflict
- Managing Bullying and Relationships

- Coping with crisis
- Coping with transitions & decision-making
- Developmental & Emotional Challenges
- Promoting and developing personal awareness
- Social Settings

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

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

This process is facilitated using core-counselling skills and the counsellor, evaluating their role and how they conducted the session. All confidential records are kept in a secure area.

1.7 Approach and Framework in Counselling

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

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

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

- The main task is to establish a working relationship. The Guidance Team assists students tell their stories and, if appropriate, asks them to choose a specific problem situation to work on. They believe it may be helpful to assist students to look for ways in which they may be communicating, acting, and thinking less than effectively.
- The Guidance Team belief in genuineness allows the development of trust between the student and the Guidance Counsellor. It is important that the Guidance Team understand their own emotions and are aware of their reactions so that they can concentrate on the feelings of their students.
- Trying to understand what the student is feeling, from the students' point of view, is essential in order for the Guidance Team to be effective. Failure to convey this understanding could leave the student feeling isolated and alone with their fears. This incorporates a regard for the student's value as a person and a concern for their welfare.
- The ability to create a *climate* where there is warmth, enthusiasm, acceptance, respect and interpersonal sensitivity is central for effective counselling. These highly developed interpersonal characteristics are coupled with a high degree of academic competence. There is a change of roles from being a teacher to that of being a Guidance Counsellor. A Guidance Counsellor needs to be able to support the student so that they understand that counselling is a process.
- The Guidance Team believes that client-centred counselling is effective for individual and Group Counselling. The solution to problems, the choices, and challenges confronting students can be within their capabilities. The Guidance Team uses effective listening and responding skills, they create an accepting and empathic environment for all students. These students progress because

they feel understood, have clarified their thoughts and feelings and may move freely towards better decisions.

- The Guidance Team is very aware that some students will not achieve their goals through their own self-directed efforts. In these situations, they will be more helpful, active, suggesting choices, perhaps challenging, and directing. Their approach will be responsive to the individual or group needs, goals, cultures, and environments. They help the students stand back from their difficulties and to look at them in different ways and from different viewpoints. They help them to ask questions of themselves. The answers lead to a greater self-knowledge, and by looking at this information and learning how to process it, they may have empowered the students to deal more efficiently with future problems, making them aware of alternatives and choices.
- The Guidance Team seeks to empower the student by putting the student in charge of the process. Change will happen more quickly, when the person who seeks the change is at the heart of and in charge of the process. The counselling process may develop to assist the students to change their thinking, feelings, or behaviour so that the problem situation is addressed more effectively than in the past. The Guidance Team assists the students to set goals and to develop and implement strategies to attain these goals.

The Guidance and Counselling Department is constantly evolving and adapting in response to the changing needs of Coachford College and the changing profile of its student body. By liaising with the AEN Department, we ensure that students with Special Education Needs are catered for within the Guidance and Counselling Department. We acknowledge the support of the school senior leadership team, the general teaching staff, parents, etc. in facilitating and promoting the continued development of the Guidance & Counselling Department in Coachford College.

1.8 Ethical Principles

The Guidance Counsellors at Coachford College understand that it is their duty to comply with the Code of Ethics as outlined by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors in 2012. When faced with an ethical dilemma they engage in the formal decision making process, aware of the ethical issues concerning competence, conduct, confidentiality, consent, testing, evaluation and research.

“Guidance Counsellors respect the dignity, integrity and welfare of their clients. They work in ways which promote clients’ control over their own lives, and they respect clients’ ability to make decisions and engage in personal change in the light of their own beliefs and values.” (Code of Ethics I.G.C. 2012). The ethical operation of the service also adheres to DE Information Note 0003/2024 regarding the secure storage, confidentiality and transfer of guidance-counselling records.

In light of these aims, the Guidance & Counselling Department have the following objectives:

- Respect differences and understand the cultural background of students whom we work with. Not to discriminate against students based on age, colour, culture, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or socio-economic status
- Inform students of the purposes, goals, and benefits of counselling. Provide students with an explanation of the limitations at the beginning of counselling sessions
- Respect confidentiality and avoid unwarranted disclosures of confidential information
- Understand that confidentiality does not apply when disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to the student and others. Legal requirements may also demand that information be revealed. In these cases, we will consult with the Principal as DLP.
- Obtain permission from students to disclose information to others. Only essential information will be revealed
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality in creating, storing, accessing, and destroying records of students that we have on computer or in files

- Endeavour to be accurate, honest, and unbiased in our reports
- Competent in the use of computers and try to ensure that students understand the purposes and limitations of the computer applications in guidance work
- Practice guidance and counselling within the boundaries of our competence. Commitment to in-service to expand and maintain our professional competence
- Responsible for the appropriate application, scoring and interpretation of various tests in guidance and counselling. Promote the welfare and best interests of the student in the utilisation of these assessment techniques
- Not to use our position for unjustified personal gains or relationships with clients.

1.9 Responsibilities of the Guidance Service

The Guidance Service has responsibilities to:

- Conduct interest inventories and career search inventories online.
- Consult with the senior leadership team, student support team, Year Heads and other staff individuals and teams.
- Deliver personal development, study skills and information sessions with class groups
- Identify career and educational paths with students
- Identify students' needs through consultation with student council
- Keep records
- Manage guidance and counselling service
- Manage information
- Network with other professionals, colleges, community services etc.
- Offer a confidential and professional service
- Refer students to other services

Methods used by the service:

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

Resources used by the service:

- Guest speakers
- Interests, abilities and aptitude assessments
 - CAT Testing
 - Careers Portal – (Inventory)
- External services & support agencies
- Senior leadership and staff

1.10 Information Gathering and Dissemination

Information is an important component in Guidance & Counselling. It informs all aspects of career, vocational and educational opportunity. Current information is gathered from a variety of sources such as VSware records, Athena tracker, AEN files, Careers Portal career file. In addition, during one to one meetings with students we compile a shared google sheet to inform & record as much information as possible on the widest range of options with the goal of enabling the student to make informed career decisions. Information is disseminated to students through email, Google classroom, guidance classes and one to one meetings. A resource is made available to all students and parents at the beginning of the year with updated information on all career open days, college open days, CAO dates etc. Information management practices operate in line with DE Information Note 0003/2024 regarding the storage and transfer of guidance counselling notes, ensuring compliance with national standards.

1.11 Referral Service

Referrals can also be made to the Guidance Counsellor, as a member of the Student Support Team, by any member of staff at Coachford College using the appropriate procedure. Referrals by any member of staff is made using the referral form which is available to all staff via the weekly update. This form is emailed to all members of the Student Support Team and dealt with by the appropriate member. The cases discussed in the weekly Student Support Team Meetings and depending on the student's need, he/she is assigned to the most appropriate member of the Student support team. A student may self-refer by contacting any member of the Student support team via email or in person.

When a referral is made to the Guidance Counsellor where necessary and appropriate, the student is referred to other professionals for specialised services, such as Jigsaw, Pieta House & CAMHS. The student is supported at all stages of the process. There is also an opportunity for parents to refer their daughter/son by the Year Head or directly to the Guidance Counsellor via email.

1.12 Current Guidance Provision

The Guidance and Counselling Department has 32 hours allocated to it and is serviced by two qualified Guidance Counsellors. This is divided up as one third as classroom guidance and two thirds as one-to-one guidance meetings. The Guidance Counsellors have the use of a meeting Room, that is block booked on a weekly basis. Brochures and resources from external colleges are available from the Guidance Counsellors on request. Notices of upcoming events are emailed to students and posted to the relevant google classroom student page. The Guidance Service has access to chrome books so students can complete the Careersportal programme. The current provision is structured to meet the requirements of DE Circular 0001/2025, which reaffirms Whole School Guidance as an entitlement under the Education Act 1998, Section 9(c).

1.13 Current Guidance Programme

The following is a summary of the current guidance service where guidance is meeting the needs of the students. The Guidance Programme is developed in accordance with the NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework (2017) and the DE Information Note 0001/2024, which defines effective guidance as a developmental sequence of learning experiences.

Personal Guidance	Resources to meet these needs	Related Subjects
Self-Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance Counsellor ● Subject Teachers ● Year Head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SPHE ● Religion ● CSPE ● Guidance
Developing Self		
Team Work		
Counselling		
Referral		
Confidence		
Motivation		
Stress Management		

Relationships		
Educational Guidance	Resources to meet these needs	Related Subjects
Subject Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance Counsellor ● Guest Speakers ● Subject Teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LCVP ● SPHE ● Guidance
Study Skills		
Assessments		
Goals & Plans		
Career Guidance	Resources to meet these needs	Related Subjects
Educational Routes/pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance Counsellor ● Guest Speakers ● TY Co-ordinator ● Internet Access ● Relationship with institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance ● Life skills/SPHE
Interview Skills		
Presentations from 3 rd Level Colleges		
Training Courses		
PLC Courses		
Job Options		
Self Assessment		
Work Experience		

It must be noted that in the area of Personal Guidance each Guidance Counsellor is timetabled for personal and/or career guidance meetings.

1.14 Current Guidance Programme by Year Group

The year-group programmes are organised in line with the Whole School Guidance Framework (NCGE 2017) and the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, which recognise guidance as integral to student wellbeing.

First Year Programme

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

Main aims of the First Year Programme are:

- Appropriate assessment prior to entry and on-going assessment afterwards. (CAT4 are administered by the AEN department aided by the Guidance department)
- Help students to adjust to their new school
- Introduce students to the school Guidance Counselling Service
- Offer and provide counselling services.
- Identify any student thought to be “at risk” or who may have particular needs.
- Offer and provide a referral service.
- Foster the growth of self-esteem and confidence.
- Liaise with the Well-being teachers in delivering four separate guidance focus weeks throughout the year.
- Liaise with Wellbeing teachers to include the foundations for good study habits and homework organisation as well as the overall wellbeing needs of students.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the First Year Programme.

Implementation of the above aims:

- Welcome new students to the school on their first day in September.
- Liaise with the Year Heads to ensure that each pupil is made to feel that he/she belongs in the school community.
- Ensure that students know the location of the Guidance Counsellor’s Office and that the service is available to *all* pupils, whether self-referred or referred by others.
- Assess each student’s numerical and verbal ability using standardised tests via Athena Tracker.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.

Second Year Programme

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

Main aims of the Second Year Programme are:

- Continue to develop the relationship established in First Year.
- Help students develop a positive self-image.
- Help students set goals and targets both personally and academically.
- Liaise with the Well-being teachers in delivering four separate guidance focus weeks throughout the year.
- Reinforce the study skills programme with Well-being teachers started in First Year.
- Available to all who come for individual counselling – whether self-referred or referred by others.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Second Year programme.

Implementation of the above aims:

- Liaise with Well-being teachers in the implementation of the Well-being Programme to include the foundations for good study habits and homework organisation as well as the overall wellbeing needs of students.
- Continue to liaise with parents, fellow staff members and AEN Department.
- Continue with student skills programmes with Second Year groups.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.

Third Year Programme

Ensure that Guidance Counsellors are available to each student on an individual basis. The emphasis is on

helping students to prepare effectively for the state examinations. Assist students in identifying their career preferences, and the implications of this for subject choice for the Senior Cycle for those who do choose to progress to Transition Year.

Main aims of the Third Year Programme are:

- Provide information and guidance on subject choice to students on a needs basis.
- Delivering weekly timetabled Guidance classes to each 3rd year group, with particular emphasis on decision-making, study skills, stress management, motivation and career self concept.
- Assist students in the development of effective study habits and examination techniques in careers classes.
- Continue to use Careersportal and conduct self assessments.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Third Year programme.

Implementation of the above aims to:

- Liaise, when necessary, with staff, students, and parents in relation to the social & emotional aspects of the Wellbeing Programme.
- Continue to liaise with subject teachers, year heads and AEN teachers in the delivery of Careers Classes to include the foundations for good study habits and homework organisation as well as the overall wellbeing needs of students.
- Be available for individual counselling as required.

Transition Year Programme

In accordance with the Transition Year Programme Statement (NCCA, 2024), the Guidance Counsellor plays a key role in TY as a member of the TY Core Team, supporting the design and coordination of TY learning experiences. TY includes the dedicated Career Exploration Student Dimension, where students explore diverse pathways, gain workplace experience, develop career-related competencies, and increase self-awareness of interests, aptitudes, values and dispositions. The Guidance Counsellor contributes directly by preparing students for work experience, facilitating guided reflection through the TY Careers portal Portfolio, delivering career-related learning and supporting students in setting and reviewing career goals. TY also helps students make informed decisions about Senior Cycle subject choices and future educational or vocational routes. In addition, TY promotes personal growth in areas such as wellbeing, confidence, decision-making, empathy and leadership, aligning with the personal and social dimensions of Whole School Guidance.

Through a variety of learning experiences, the Transition Year programme facilitates the integrated development of the cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and vocational aptitudes and abilities of each individual student.

Main aims of the Transition Year Programme are to:

- Assist students to develop a sound knowledge of self.
- Liaise, when necessary, with staff, students, and parents in relation to the social & emotional aspects of the Well-being/RSE Programmes.
- Help students to discover and develop a sense of their own individual talents, aptitudes, and abilities with regard to future educational and vocational participation.
- Help students appreciate the importance of a healthy, balanced lifestyle and to encourage the development of leisure activities.
- Assist them in their pursuit of work experience.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Transition Year programme.

Implementation of the above aims:

- Administer Interest Inventories such as Careers Portal. Students may discuss the implications of

- these results to career choice
- Instruct students in the use of Qualifax.ie as an aid for research in course choice
- Be available for individual counselling as required

LC1 Programme

The major thrust of the Fifth Year Programme is to assist students in relation to the transition to Senior Cycle.

Main aims of the Fifth Year programme are to:

- Help students develop and accurately define their occupational self-concept clarifying their interests, abilities, and goals.
- Liaising, when necessary, with staff, students, and parents in relation to the social & emotional aspects of the Well-being/RSE Programmes.
- Continue developing effective social skills with students in individual or group work.
- Stress the importance of relaxation and leisure activities.
- Provide detailed information on careers and third-level education.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the Fifth year Programme.

Implementation of the above aims:

- Reinforce the importance of good study habits, time management, and forward planning in individual / group work.
- Encourage students to attend Third Level College Open Days on students attending Open Days.
- Individual counselling on request.
- Provide opportunity for individual interview to discuss career options, subject levels and the implications thereof, etc.
- Continue the work of earlier years in the context of the students growing awareness of personal freedom and responsibility, values, life-style options etc.
- Continue to use Careers portal which assists matching interests, aptitudes with career and course requirements.
- Class work in topics such as the points system, CAO HEAR/DARE schemes, minimum entry requirements, grants and maintenance scheme, possibilities of studying in another country especially UK, and the UCAS system.
- Continue to liaise with Subject Teachers, Year Heads, AEN Teachers and Parents.

LC2 Programme

The Sixth Year (LC2) Programme is designed to equip students with the knowledge, guidance and confidence they need to make informed decisions about their future. Its core aim is to ensure that every student understands the full range of pathways available to them such as CAO college entry, PLC courses, apprenticeships, further training options, and direct entry to the world of work. The programme also supports students in developing the practical skills and personal readiness required to make a successful transition to college life or employment.

Main aims of Sixth Year (LC2) Programme are to:

- Liaise, when necessary, with staff, students, and parents in relation to the social & emotional aspects of the Wellbeing/RSE Programmes.
- Consolidate all previous work done on study skills, learning, and exam techniques.
- Outline the implications of part-time work during this exam year.
- Facilitate the transition from school to work or Third Level Education.
- Provide detailed vocational information.
- Help students make correct choices regarding College courses.
- Stress the importance of a healthy balance between study, relaxation, and leisure activities.
- Reinforce the importance of study habits and effective time management.

- Introduce information on Costs and grants for 3rd level.
- On-going evaluation and re-planning of the LC2 Programme.

Implementation of the above aims:

- Provide an appointment for an individual interview for each student to discuss aptitudes, interest, abilities, to assess past achievements and future goals. Students are invited to return for follow-up appointments.
- Study skills classes throughout the year commencing in September.
- Cover topics such as CAO, UCAS, Finance, Grants, PLC courses and Apprenticeships in Guidance class.
- Encourage each student to use Careers Portal & Qualifax online at home. Our students and parents alike have re-iterated the invaluable resource this is when discussing college options at home.
- Develop information research skills. Familiarise students with Qualifax and Careers Portal
- Available for individual counselling as requested.
- Administer interest tests as necessary to meet student's requirements.
- Update the personal record of each student in relation to their vocational interviews
- Evaluate the programme with the students and adapt to improve.
- Continue to liaise with Senior Leadership, Subject Teachers, Year Heads, AEN Teachers and Parents.

1.15 Resources Employed

Digital Notices

Digital communication plays an important role in the dissemination of information. The guidance department uses emails and Google Classroom to circulate important career and college information to 6th year students.

Computer Software

Up-to-date, relevant information is easily accessible to the Guidance Counsellor through the internet, guidance software and websites. The service relies on the NCGE School Guidance Handbook as an ongoing reference point for best practice, programme design and policy implementation.

1.16 Evaluation

The Guidance & Counselling Department employs a variety of methods for evaluating their role in Coachford College. All LC2 students are invited to complete an evaluation of the services provided by the Department.

1.17 Policies

A number of policies underlie the provision of the Guidance Service including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy (Bí Cineálta)
- Child Safeguard Statement
- Critical Incident Policy
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Suspension & Expulsion Policy
- Acceptable Usage of Technology Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- AEN Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Education Act 1998 – Section 9(c): obligation to provide access to guidance
- National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance (2024–2030) – broader national alignment of guidance provision

Strand 2: Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Department

2.1 Introduction

Coachford College is committed to providing a comprehensive and effective learning support program for students. This enables a specific cohort of students who have additional needs, with an appropriate framework of support, to access the curriculum and to achieve their potential. The school's Mission Statement sets out the school's vision for the encouragement of the pursuit of excellence and the support of every student of an environment conducive to the greatest standards of achievement in a community centred around mutual respect with wellbeing at its core, in keeping with Cork ETB's Core Values as set out below.



2.2 Aims and Objectives

At Coachford College, a highly inclusive school environment in ethos and practice. Inclusion is practised and promoted, endeavouring to provide a full education in line with the varied and diverse needs of all its students. All students are welcomed into the school community, recognising that additional support is required for some students in a mainstream setting.

At Coachford College, an Additional Educational Needs student is defined as any student who experiences challenges in coping with the mainstream curriculum and/or school environment due to assessed specific or general learning difficulties; assessed syndromes; physical disabilities; emotional/behavioural disorders.

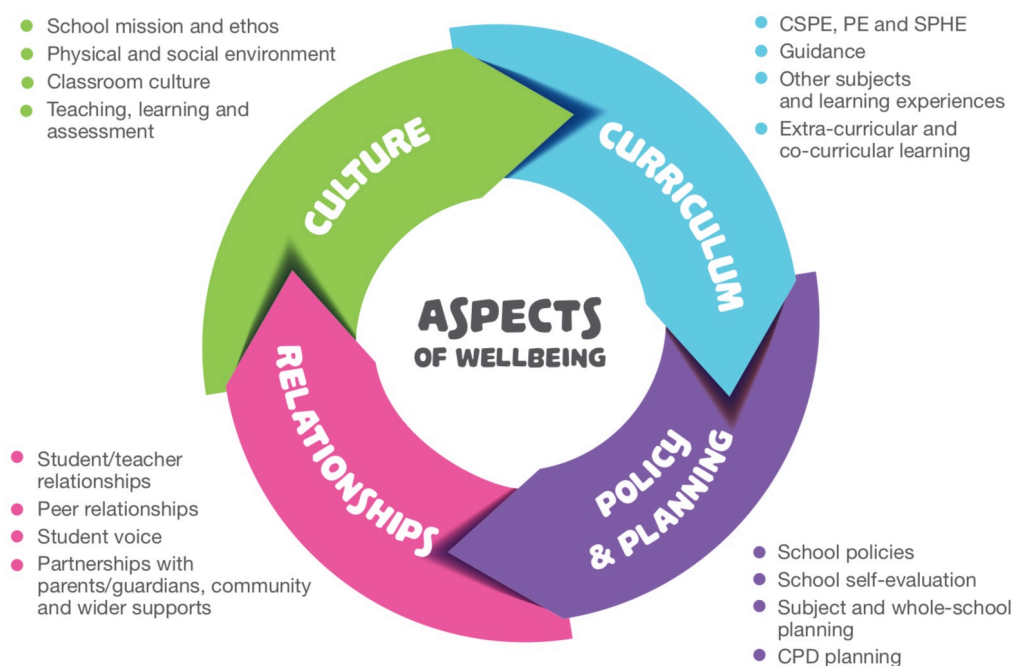
This Policy aims to:

1. Provide for the support, learning and wellbeing of all students in a high inclusive environment, underpinning the school Mission Statement;

2. Implement the curriculum, policies, procedures, culture, ethos and the activities which seek to ensure the optimal achievement of all students in Coachford College, regardless of their learning needs;
3. Implement the requirements set out in relevant legislation and guidance documents;
4. Ensure that appropriate structures are in place to support all students;
5. Recognise the interplay between positive experience of school life, student achievement and long term wellbeing;
6. Offer a structured approach to supporting our young people through the creation of a multiplicity of opportunities both within and outside the classroom focused on learning and growth;
7. Cultivate and foster collaborative relationships between students, staff parents/guardians, primary schools, Cork Education and Training Board (CETB) and external agencies to endeavour to achieve the best possible outcomes for students;
8. Harness the expertise of the staff and outside agencies to support and respond to needs of students;
9. Provide an umbrella policy which outlines a structure that links a series of other policies which relate to Special Educational Needs.
10. To raise awareness in the whole school community of Special Educational Needs.

2.3 Whole School Vision

At Coachford College the nurturing of students with Additional Educational Needs is of utmost importance. Coachford College aims to provide a safe and successful learning environment in which each student's learning and wellbeing is fully supported, allowing them to develop their own individual potential. This Policy aims to make visible the school's support and procedures, in keeping with the vision set out in The Continuum of Support, National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Wellbeing Guidelines and Indicators of Wellbeing (NCCA, 2016 and 2021) and other relevant guidance documents.



2.4 Supporting Teaching and Learning for Students with Additional Learning Needs

2.4.1 Transition to Post-Primary School

Students are enrolled in Coachford College in accordance with the requirements of the Admissions Act (2020) as set out in the school's Admissions Policy. Following enrolment, parents and guardians are encouraged to submit any relevant AEN information and reports to the school. On receipt of relevant information, a member of the AEN co-ordinating team liaises with parents/ guardians at the earliest opportunity to formulate a plan for support of the student. The relevant information e.g. professional reports, Educational passports, Student Support Plans/IEPs from primary schools serve to support the plan for support of the student. The senior leadership team in consultation with the AEN team assigns appropriate class placements for individual students to maximise the supports available, whilst being mindful of the available resources. Priority lies with allocating the most support to the children with the greatest need.

2.4.2 Identification of students with Additional Educational Needs

- Parents and guardians are invited to share AEN information with the school on enrolment.
- With parental permission, the primary schools often contact the AEN co-ordinating team.
- Passports from primary school are consulted.
- CAT4 and PPAD-E in 1st Year helps to identify previously unidentified students who have additional learning needs.

2.4.3 Assessment

- An assessment of literacy and numeracy skills is carried out (school devised)
- 1st term of 1st year and Transition Year: Cognitive Ability Test 4 (CAT 4 Assessment) is a cognitive abilities test which examines four areas of students' ability. A standard score is given for each area and finally, a mean standard score is given. This test helps to identify students who may have additional learning needs which have not been identified previously. It also provides a baseline on every student which facilitates the tracking of their academic progress through school, which is monitored with the assistance of Athena Tracker.
- 1st term of 1st Year: PPAD-E is a literacy assessment which examines word reading, spelling, comprehension, reading speed and writing.
- RACE Screening: WIAT-111-Uk - Spelling screening is carried out on all students in 2nd year. Further testing in reading and handwriting will be administered as appropriate to determine eligibility for RACE.
- WIAT-111-Uk is used for RACE assessment for spelling and grammar waiver, reader and reader assistance.
- DASH is used for handwriting assessment for students who have handwriting difficulties and may need accommodation for State Examinations.
- In circumstances in which the school is asked to assess a student for an Irish exemption, the WRAT5 assessment is used.

- Assessments for DARE will be administered for students who have an identified and documented history of an AEN and where their literacy results require updating. WIAT111-UK and WRAT5 are used for DARE assessments.
- To avoid over-testing on a particular testing kit, the school reserves the right to interchange between, WRAT 5 and WIAT-111-Uk, when necessary.

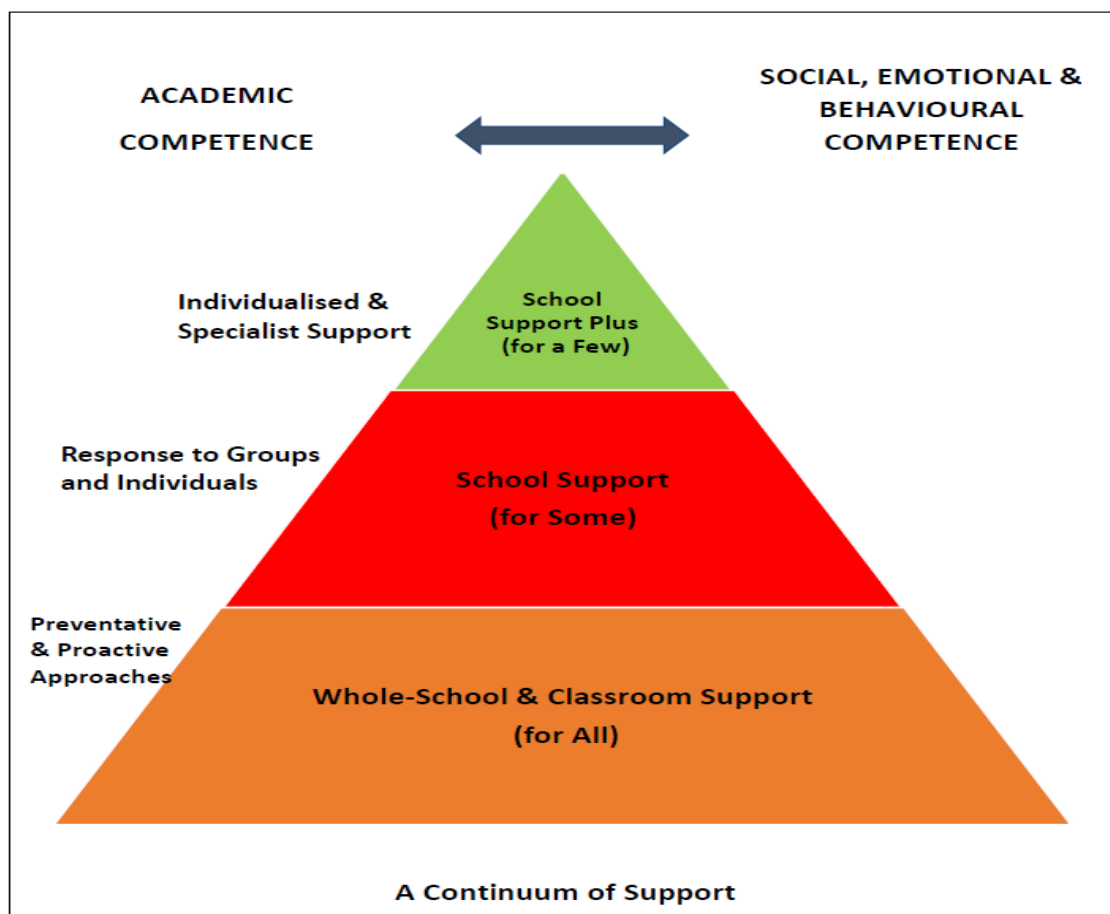
Methods of assessment are in constant review and may be changed to best suit the needs of students.

Data collected through assessment may be utilised to:

- Support students, parents/guardians and teachers in identifying and supporting individual learning needs;
- Guide Resource and Learning Support;
- Identify students with particular needs;
- Enable learning support/resource teachers to devise a suitable programme of support;
- To inform Student Support Plans for individual students.
- Apply for reasonable accommodations for the Junior and Leaving Certificate State Examinations where applicable.

2.4.4 Types of Provision

Support is allocated to students in accordance with the level of need, in accordance with the Continuum of Support (NEPS), as follows:



2.4.4.1 Support for All

Coachford College adopts a whole-school approach to the support of all students' learning, and has in place a series of policies and procedures which aim to:

1. Create a safe environment which helps students that is conducive to learning and wellbeing, supports the prevention of factors which negatively impact on student achievement;
2. Promote an understanding of and commitment to learning and wellbeing;
3. Support identification and intervention in the case of students who have additional learning needs. These steps are reflected in various school policies set out in 1.2 above and are supported by a commitment to quality teaching and learning, broad curricular provision, learning supports, and a whole school approach to assessment, feedback and reporting.
4. **Team Teaching** (In-class support): Team Teaching has been embedded into teaching and learning at Coachford College. Classes are organised in mixed ability groups apart from the banding of core subjects English, Irish and Maths to allow for uptake at differentiated levels from 2nd Year onwards. This serves to promote a sense of democracy and a sense of community in all classes. In keeping with best practice, this approach is central to the promotion of student wellbeing and self-esteem. Team teaching is frequently provided in English and Maths classes, especially in 1st Year to best support all students and learning styles.
5. **Academic Tracking** provides evidence-based assessment of students' progress. The Co-ordinator of Academic Tracking, along with the Co-ordinator of Attendance, Subject Teachers, Tutors and Year Heads collaborate to monitor students' engagement levels in relation to attendance, classwork and academic progress. Concerns regarding student engagement levels are reported to the Student Support Team and a support plan is put in place in order to improve the student's engagement, participation and learning outcomes.

2.4.4.2 Support for Some

There is a more focused approach adopted with several identifiable groups of students who have additional needs. These structures seek to provide a more targeted support structure to promote and scaffold learning and wellbeing for these identified groups.

Supports are put in place by the AEN Co-ordinating Team, in collaboration with the Student Support Team and Year Heads, employing a range of different supports and interventions which include:

- Small Group and Team Teaching;
- Behavioural Support;
- One Good Adult initiative,
- Counselling, etc

Small Group Teaching is provided to students with identified literacy and numeracy difficulties, usually at or below the 10th percentile. This teaching usually takes place for those who have exemptions from Irish at the times when Irish is timetabled, or at other appropriate times with the agreement of parents/guardians.

2.4.4.3 Support for a Few

Coachford College has support in place which focuses on interventions for students with more complex and enduring needs. Work with this group of students is structured under the development of a Student Support Plan which may include assisting in the nurturing of learning skills and competencies, resilience, self-care, etc.

The nature of supports provided include:

1. **1:1 Support** is provided for students with multiple complex needs. In some cases, students may be referred for the additional support of outside agencies.
2. **SNA Support** is available to students who have care needs e.g. mobility issues, medication needs, toileting needs, flight risk etc. Students with care needs will always be prioritised over students with educational needs for this type of support.
3. **Curriculum Reduction** may be considered for a minority of students under specific circumstances in consultation with parents/guardians, the senior leadership team and external agencies, as relevant.
4. **Home-Based 'July' Provision** is facilitated for students who are identified as in need of national support. Coachford College works closely with parents and guardians, in endeavouring to arrange suitable tutors for its students.
5. **Exceptionally Able Students:** While Exceptionally Able Students can only be officially identified by an outside agency, the school does have a role to play in identifying high achieving students. These students are identified from data collected from CAT4 Assessment and a whole school approach is adapted to meet their needs through the facilitation of differentiated learning.

2.5 Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Mindful of the mixed ability settings in most classes, a variety of teaching approaches and methodologies are utilised to support student engagement and maximise learning and achievement. Emphasis is placed on the integration of technology into teaching and learning, with the introduction of Digital Learning as a core Wellbeing subject across the three years of Junior Cycle, in keeping with the aims and objectives of the school's Blended Learning Plan and School Self Evaluation, as evidenced in the School Improvement Plan.

2.5.1 Assistive Technology

The use of Assistive Technology (AT) is strongly supported at Coachford College, where appropriate, to support students' learning within the mainstream classroom.

2.5.2 Procedures for the use of AT

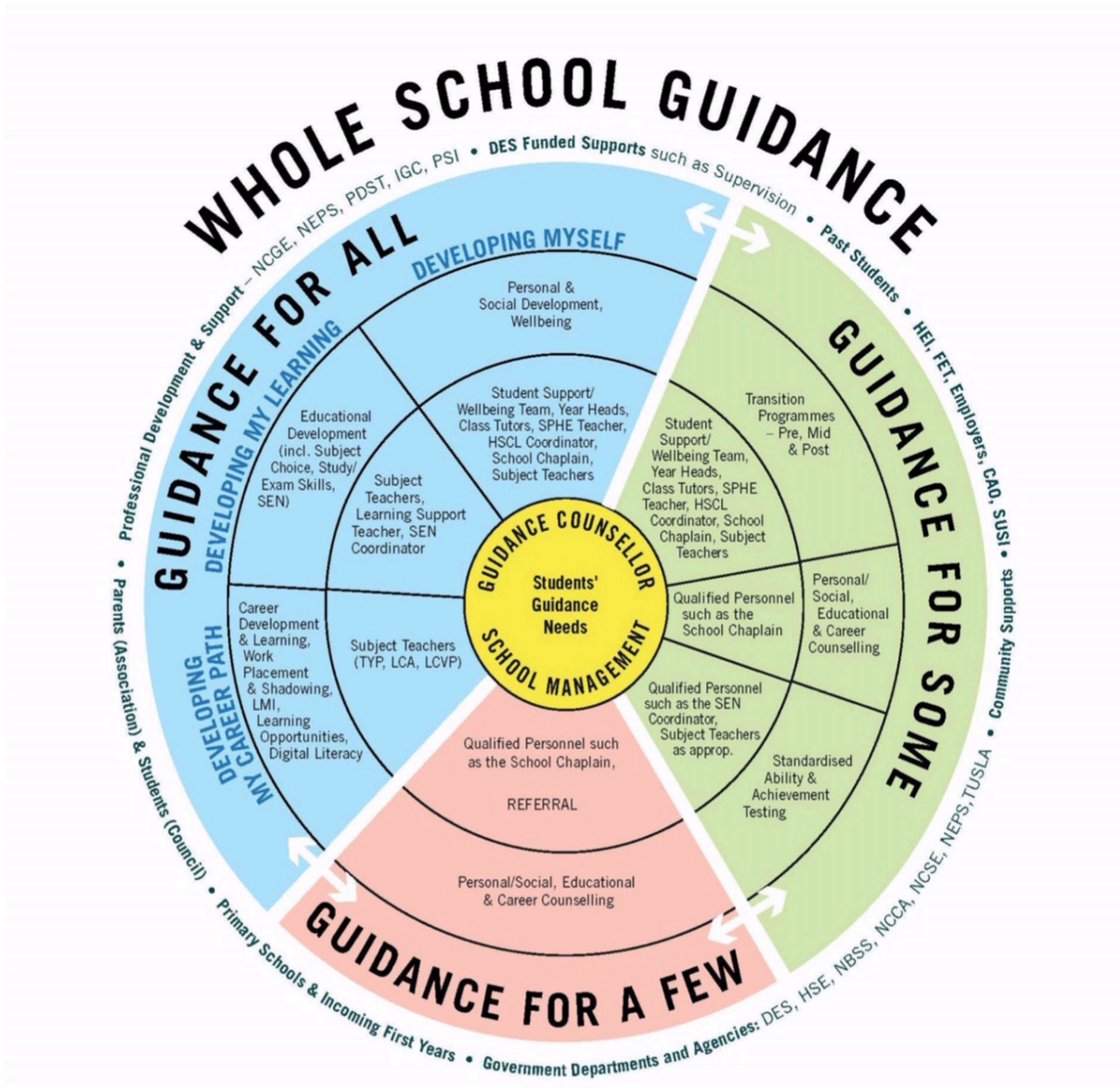
- If a device is already being used by the student in their Primary School (as granted by the NCSE), the laptop should be transferred with the student on transition.
- Devices which are grant-aided by the NCSE are the property of Coachford College, may be used by the student for their personal use but only in keeping with the provisions of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, and must be returned to the College when the student leaves the school.
- In cases where a device is in need of repair and where this repair work is deemed economical the school may undertake to have it repaired.
- In cases where the NCSE do not grant finance for the purchase of a device but in the opinion of NEPS Psychologist/Educational Psychologist its use is necessary, the parent/guardian may, in consultation with the AEN Co-ordinating Team, purchase a student device. The student may use this laptop in school for subjects where there is a high volume of writing.
- The AEN department will facilitate students' practice and improvement in typing as deemed necessary.
- The AEN Department assesses the student's suitability for a RACE application to use a laptop for exams. The SEC has issued clear criteria for this application process. The AEN Department will follow these guidelines, and submit an application on behalf of the student if this criteria is met. Where possible Coachford College facilitates approved

students for accommodations in house exams, contingent upon staff resources.

2.6 Links to Guidance

Coachford College has implemented the NEPS Continuum of Support as set out below. The AEN team are represented on the Student Support Team and work closely with the Guidance Counsellors, Chaplain, Year Heads and Senior Leadership Team to support student learning, behaviour and wellbeing.

Students with Special Educational Needs who wish to apply for the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) must tick the disability box on their CAO application. There are deadlines set by the CAO for -completion of an online statement from the student outlining how their disability affects their learning, submission of a downloaded form which the College must complete and submission of professional reports outlining a diagnosis. The AEN Department works closely with the Guidance Department to advise parents on professional reports required by the CAO. Students with physical and medical needs and students with a mental health illness may also qualify for DARE. New Educational Assessments are not required for students with a diagnosis of dyslexia, but up to date scores for word reading and word spelling must be submitted. The AEN Department will assess students for this purpose. To qualify the two scores must be at or below a standard score of 81. Scores from professional reports that are no older than 2 years may be used instead of school scores. (Please see DARE guidelines in this regard).



2.6.1 Links to Wellbeing

The **Wellbeing Indicators** as set out in Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2016 and 2021) are as follows: **Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected, and Aware.**



2.6.1.1 Wellbeing Aims

Coachford College aims to enable its students to become skilled in the following ways:

- Develop confidence in and enjoyment of all learning activities;
- Be able to act to protect and promote their wellbeing and that of others;
- To develop students' food literacy skills, so that they understand the impact of their food choices on health, the environment and the economy;
- Know when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices;
- Feel connected to their school, friends, community and the wider world;
- Understand how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts;
- Feel confident in themselves and having the coping skills to deal with life's challenges;
- Know where they can go for help – Student Support Team, Staff, Year Head, etc.;
- Believe that, with effort, they can achieve their potential, nurturing a growth mindset among students rather than a fixed mindset;
- Show care and respect for others;
- Have positive relationships with friends, peers, and staff members;
- Feel listened to and valued;
- Be aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and being able to make sense of them;
- Be aware of their personal values, and make informed decisions which they own;
- Be aware of themselves as learners, and know how they can improve.

2.6.1.2 Promoting and Supporting Culture of Wellbeing in our School

Coachford College promotes a warm, welcoming, encouraging and positive school culture in the following ways:

- Lunchtime activities which enable students to avail of quiet and reflective time are facilitated.
- The school promotes physical activity, and healthy eating choices.
- Teachers have high expectations for all students.
- There are open, positive, supportive relationships between teachers and students in class and outside.
- A culture of collaboration and cooperation is promoted through day to day teaching, learning and assessment practices.
- Students feel safe, secure and respected in their classrooms.
- Students are encouraged to actively engage in their learning so that they can enjoy being at school.
- Students receive regular formative feedback about their learning and how they can improve.
- Students have regular opportunities to talk about their learning and what helps them to learn.
- Teachers use active methodologies to develop the key skills in their subjects.
- Teaching and learning is differentiated to provide an appropriate challenge to enable all students to engage and experience success.
- Students are aware of who they should turn to if in need of support or if they are aware that another student is potentially at risk. The school's Child Safeguarding Statement is discussed with all students at the commencement of the school year, and again in Wellbeing classes. Child Safeguarding notices are posted in each year group's social area.
- The RSE programme aims to enhance learning in the area of relationships and sexuality in a caring and balanced manner.
- Supportive relationships with parents/guardians are nurtured in order to highlight, monitor, evaluate and promote student wellbeing. Regular feedback on learning is given to parents/guardians and students in keeping with the provision set out in the [Reporting Guidelines](#) (NCCA, 2018).
- Measurable targets for individual student wellbeing, in conjunction with students, teachers, SNAs, Year Heads and the Student Support Team through the use of the Domains and Standards set out in [Looking at our Schools 2022](#).
- The school's Critical Incident Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are reviewed annually.
- Wellbeing Programmes such as Kindness Week, Wellbeing Week, Anti-Bullying Programmes, Online Safety, Drug and Alcohol Awareness are facilitated.

2.6.1.3 Relationships and Wellbeing

Coachford College recognises that true wellbeing can only be assured through the promotion and development of positive, nurturing and respectful relationships within the school community.

Coachford College strives to achieve this in the following ways:

- Ensuring that student-teacher relationships are friendly, caring and respectful;
- Building an emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour enhances the whole school community;
- Ensuring that Student Voice has a central place in all school planning and review, and that students' views are not only heard but acted upon;
- Ensuring that staff members are aware that they may be the One Good Adult to whom a student turns to for support and help during a difficult time. In turn always being cognizant of providing support to staff when they are dealing with vulnerable students and ensuring that staff members know who they can turn to when they need advice and support;

- Fully informing students as to where to get support and how to access the care structures in the school;
- Resolving behaviour issues with care, respect and consistency;
- Ensuring that there is a shared vision and understanding of what student wellbeing means which emphasises strengths and capacities;
- Encouraging students to show respect, care and concern for each other so that they feel safe and supported amongst their peers.
- Providing forums for students so that their voices may be heard and they are involved in making decisions about their life in school;
- Actively encouraging student voice, providing appropriate platforms for student feedback and ensuring that students know that their feedback is valued and, where appropriate, acted upon;
- Ensuring that parents/guardians feel welcome, respected, and listened to as partners in the education of their children;
- Sharing information with parents/guardians, as appropriate, with a view to supporting them in supporting their child's wellbeing;
- Maintaining strong links with the local community;
- Wellbeing is reflected strongly in our curricular provision: There is a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of CSPE, PE, SPHE, Digital Learning and Guidance as part of the Wellbeing programme at Junior Cycle.
- Teachers are supported in working collaboratively in the planning for these subjects, and Continuous Professional Learning is actively supported.
- Curricular provision is informed by feedback from students, parents/guardians, teachers who have collectively and collaboratively compiled the **identified needs** which in turn inform the school's Wellbeing Plan.
- The Parents' Council provides an important forum for feedback from parents/guardians, and has a key voice in the planning of school curriculum and policy.

2.6.2 Links with Outside Agencies

Coachford College works closely with outside agencies to ensure optimal opportunities, support and outcomes for its students with additional educational needs. These include:

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS);
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO);
- Visiting Teacher for the Deaf (NCSE);
- Visiting teacher for the Visually Impaired (NCSE);
- State Examinations Commission;
- TUSLA Child and Family Agency.
- National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI)

2.7 Continuous Professional Learning

The upskilling of staff with responsibility for Special Educational Needs is a key priority at Coachford College. Members of the AEN Co-ordinating Team have completed the Post Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs. Staff members have completed CPL in areas such as Friends for Life (NEPS), Universal Design for Learning, ASIAM staff training, Wynn McCormack Dyslexia Whole School Awareness, Usability training for the use of Assistive Technology (AENCO and SNA). Full teaching and SNA CPL has been facilitated in areas such as Dyslexia and Trauma. Coachford College is participating in ETBI's SEN Mapping Initiative, with CPL having been provided for the whole teaching and SNA staff at its rollout. All AEN Co-ordinators are actively involved with CETB in the development of this initiative, as well as UCC's SENCO Forum.

2.8 Reporting and Feedback

It is recognised that feedback and reporting are central to learning. As part of Coachford College's focus on assessment and reporting as part of its School Self-Evaluation process, formative feedback is provided based on success criteria to all students. Students are encouraged to use feedback to reflect and make improvements. Feedback is approached in a restorative manner, in keeping with the school's commitment to the development of Restorative Practice. Reports are provided to parents and guardians of students with additional learning needs on a regular basis.

2.9 Record-Keeping

All student records are stored confidentially in accordance with the requirements of the College's Records Retention Schedule, Data Protection Policy (CETB) and GDPR. They are made available on request to students and their parents/guardians, and are available to the Principal, Deputy Principals, relevant Year Heads, Teachers and SNAs based on need.

2.10 Roles and Responsibilities

2.10.1 AEN Co-ordinators

It is the responsibility of the AEN Co-ordinating Team to:

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the College's AEN Policy, provision and procedures;
- Promote a culture of Additional Educational Needs not being viewed in isolation, but rather in the context of whole school provision;
- Co-ordinate the AEN Register, which lists the names of students who are identified as having an additional educational need, a list of the professional reports the school has received, details of Irish exemptions, the name of the national school the student has transferred from and the name of the AENCO that has made contact with the students parents/ guardians.
- The Senior Leadership Team assigns teachers to the small group literacy/ numeracy groups, The AENCOs provide information and resources to teachers assigned by the Senior Leadership Team. For individual 1:1 tuition, the AENCOs contribute to the department's timetable by matching students with available teachers.
- Administer screening assessments to specific year groups. e.g entrance exam - incoming cohort, CAT4 and PPAD-E 1st years and TY students - CAT4. Correction of the PPAD-E and NGRT is undertaken by the SEN coordinating team. WIAT111-uk, WRAT4, DASH are administered as appropriate for Junior Cycle RACE applications, Leaving Certificate RACE applications, for DARE applications where literacy results require updating, for review purposes to track student progress.
- Convene weekly planning and review meetings of the core AEN Team.
- Create individual student support plans, and share with relevant teachers. Teachers are encouraged to contribute to these working documents.
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers of the AEN Policy and associated practices;
- Liaise with the Co-ordinator of Academic Tracking to ensure optimal student engagement, and identify where additional supports are required;
- Work closely with parents and guardians of students with AEN; Student Support
- Convene weekly planning and review meetings with the SNA team;
- Liaise with the SNA team in establishing targets for students receiving SNA support;
- Manage relevant student AEN records in accordance with the requirements of the College's Records Retention Schedule, Data Protection Policy (CETB) and GDPR;
- Organise staff training
- Identify students for reasonable accommodation in house and state examinations, with particular reference to Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE);

- Liaise with external agencies including the DES, NCSE, NEPS, Visiting Teacher, etc.;
- Support the transition of First Year AEN students from Primary to Post-Primary School.
- Monitoring and reviewing students' progress and reorganising resources if required;
- Make Assistive Technology applications on behalf of students, and oversight of the use of Assistive Technology thereafter, in accordance with school policy and procedures;
- Make resources available for mainstream and resource teachers;

2.10.2 Subject Teacher

The subject teacher is responsible for the teaching and learning of every student in their class. It is the responsibility of each subject teacher to ensure that the identified needs of students with additional educational needs in their class group are being met, by ensuring their familiarity with the student's needs, liaising with the SEN Co-ordinators and contributing to their Subject Support Plan and ensuring its implementation through the facilitation of differentiated learning, and subsequent review, reporting and feedback.

2.10.3 Resource Teacher

It is the responsibility of the resource teacher to ensure that the identified needs of students with special educational needs in their care are being met, by ensuring their familiarity with the student's needs, following the guidance of the subject teacher and contributing to their Student support plan and ensuring its implementation through the facilitation of differentiated learning, and subsequent review, reporting and feedback.

2.10.4 Special Needs Assistants

It is the responsibility of the Special Needs Assistant to look after the care needs of students with SNA access. Care needs may include arranging special chairs, monitoring movement on corridors, hygiene and safety particularly in practical classes, encouraging students to remain on task, monitoring wellbeing, assisting organisation and promoting appropriate interaction with peers and staff. Through the course of their time at Coachford College students are encouraged, where appropriate, to become independent of their SNA.

2.10.5 Year Heads

It is the responsibility of the Year Head to:

- Liaise with students, parents/guardians, the SEN Co-ordinators in overseeing the progress of all students, and
- Take the relevant action based on findings, include parents/guardians and students in target setting and to provide the necessary support.

2.10.6 Students

It is the responsibility of Students to:

- Aim for full attendance and punctuality;
- Make their best effort at all times to reach their potential;
- Complete all work assigned by their teachers in the time designated;
- Follow the advice and guidance of teachers and SNAs as to how best achieve their potential;
- Ask for help as appropriate, and
- Support each other's learning and wellbeing.
- Have all materials necessary for class.

- Look after materials given to them (book/ computers/ technology).

2.10.7 Parents and Guardians

It is the responsibility of Parents and Guardians to:

- Support their child towards full attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that their child is fully prepared for the school day by supporting the child's organisational skills where appropriate:
- Encourage and support their child towards full engagement with their learning
- Engage in active and collaborate communication with the school when necessary and appropriate;
- Support teachers and SNAs in their work to help students achieve their full potential;
- Be actively involved in their child's learning;
- Ensure that their child completes the work assigned in the time designated, and
- Monitor their child's Google Classroom, Journal, homework and general progress, as relevant.

2.10.8 Principal

On behalf of the Board of Management, the Principal is responsible for ensuring that all legislative requirements in the provision for students with special educational needs are met, and that special educational needs are not viewed in isolation, but rather in the context of whole school provision, ensuring that students with special educational needs are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, underpinning the school's Mission Statement and CETB values. The Principal may delegate certain functions to appropriate staff members, as outlined in Section 18 of the EPSEN Act (2004), appointing AEN Co-ordinators from amongst the staff. In consultation with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and other relevant personnel, the Principal liaises with the Department of Education, NCSE, SEC, CETB, etc. regarding needs and provision, ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds.

2.10.9 Board of Management

The Board of Management of Coachford College is committed to the supporting of all students in the achievement of their potential in keeping with the school's mission statement. The Board seeks to promote a caring and committed school community, in keeping with the school's mission and characteristic spirit. The core aim of the school's curriculum, policy and planning is to develop the whole person, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, spiritual and physical.

It is the responsibility of the Board to:

- Ensure that all students with learning support / special educational needs are identified and assessed;
- Ensure that the school has a special educational needs policy in place, to monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation;
- Ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in the school to ensure in as far as is practical that students with special educational needs leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society;
- Ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with special educational needs;

- Promote the development of positive partnership with parents, guardians and other relevant agencies, and to ensure that parents/guardians are kept informed of their child's learning progression;
- Ensure that parents/guardians are consulted with regard to and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education, and
- Ensure that all legislative requirements for students with special educational needs are being met.

This Board seeks to provide through this Policy, the scaffolding and framework through which every effort possible within the confines of its available resources, is made by Coachford College to meet the learning needs of each of its students. In recognition of this, this Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Strand 3: Well Being, SPHE & RSE Programmes

3.1 Introduction

This Policy has been developed in line with our school ethos, Mission Statement and characteristic spirit, and is informed by the requirements of the Education Act (1998) Education Welfare Act (2000), A Whole School Guidance Framework (NCGE, 2017), Programme Recognition Framework: Guidance Counselling (DESk, 2016), Framework for Junior Cycle (DESk, 2015), Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2021), Looking at our School: A Quality Framework 2022 (DESk, 2024), School Self-Evaluation: Next Steps 2022-2026 (DESk, 2022), Digital Strategy for Schools (DESk, 2015), and the NEPS Continuum of Support. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement/Risk Assessment, Safety Statement, Additional Educational Needs Policy, Appropriate Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, Blended Learning Plan, School Outings Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, School Uniform Policy, No Smoking Policy, Substance Abuse Policy, Data Protection Policy (CETB), Dignity in the Workplace Charter, Policy on Relationships and Sexuality and Social Media Policy (CETB). The school's Mission Statement sets out the school's vision for the encouragement of the pursuit of excellence and the creation of an environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement in a community in which mutual respect is shared in a positive environment, with wellbeing at its core.

3.1.1 Objective of the Wellbeing Policy

'The goal of Wellbeing is human flourishing, and flourishing rests on the following: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment' (Framework for Junior Cycle, DESk, 2015).

This Policy aims to:

1. Provide for the wellbeing of all students underpinning the school Mission Statement;
2. Highlight the central importance of Workplace Wellbeing;
3. Implement the curriculum, policies, procedures, culture, ethos and the activities which seek to support and develop the wellbeing of the students in Coachford College, guided by the Principles and Key Skills of Junior Cycle, and in keeping with the requirements of the 24 Junior Cycle Statements of Learning;
4. The Senior Cycle SPHE programme in Coachford College is implemented through the curriculum, policies, procedures, culture and ethos of the school, all of which work together to support and develop student wellbeing. This work is guided by the Principles and Key Skills of Senior Cycle and aligns with national wellbeing requirements for students.
5. To implement the requirements set out in relevant Junior Cycle circulars and in the guidance documents set out in 1.2 above;
6. To recognise the interplay between positive experience of school life, student achievement and long term wellbeing;
7. To offer a structured approach to supporting our young people through the creation of a multiplicity of opportunities both within and outside the classroom focused on learning for and about wellbeing;
8. To cultivate and foster respectful and caring relationships between staff and students, students and students, and staff and parents/guardians;
9. To ensure that appropriate structures are in place to support the wellbeing of students;
10. To harness the expertise of the staff and outside agencies to support and respond to needs of students;
11. To provide an umbrella policy which outlines a structure that links a series of other policies which relate to wellbeing.

3.1.2 Whole School Aims

1. To promote and develop a culture and environment which is respectful of the needs and wellbeing of all members of the school community;
2. To develop and implement policies and procedures to support staff and student wellbeing;
3. To ensure that learning for and about wellbeing is central to teaching practices and student learning, and
4. To raise awareness in the school community of issues related to student wellbeing and student support.

3.2 Wellbeing Overview

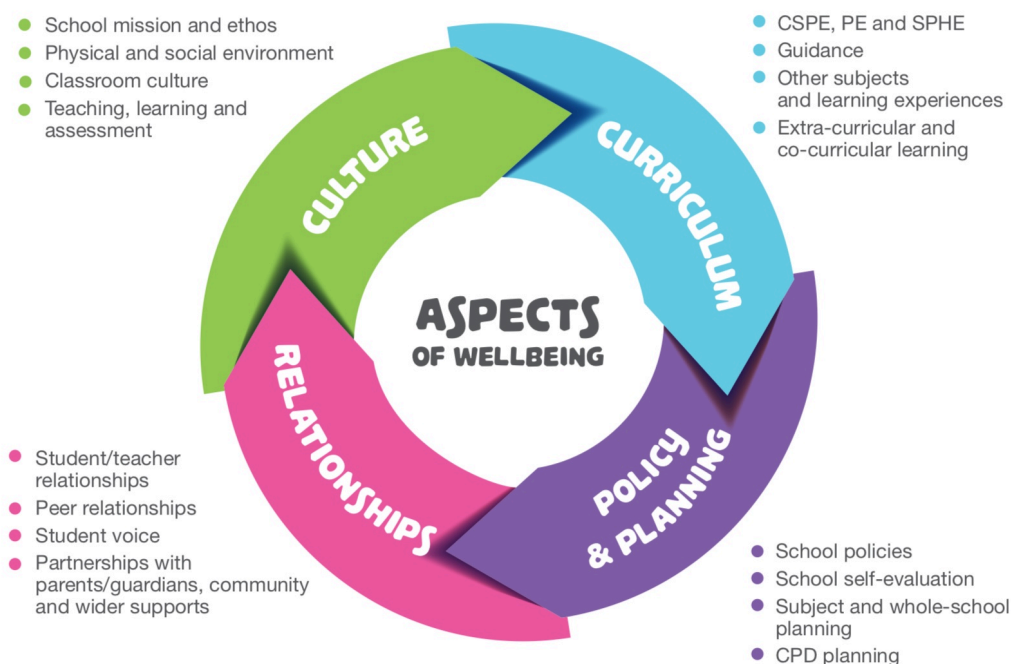
Wellbeing is described as the state of being comfortable, healthy, resilient and happy. In Coachford College we believe that wellbeing enables our school community to achieve a balanced life. The wellbeing of the students and staff is a core priority as espoused in the school's Mission Statement. Coachford College seeks to promote a caring and positive school community where everyone is valued as unique. Coachford College is committed to the promotion of emotional and social wellbeing for all, and to the creation of a respectful atmosphere between all members of the school community, its volunteers and visitors.

3.2.1 School Self-Evaluation and Wellbeing

Central to Coachford College's SSE process is the review, planning and implementation of strategies to build student wellbeing and confidence by fostering a growth mindset in students, enhancing their feelings of confidence in their learning abilities.

3.2.2 Whole School Vision

At Coachford College the wellbeing of the school community is of utmost importance. The school's environment of care and support is both formal and informal. This Policy aims to make visible the school's ongoing efforts to enhance Wellbeing. It aims to outline the school's planning of Curriculum, Culture, Relationships, Policy and Planning, all of which have wellbeing at their core. Moreover, this policy aims to outline the school's informal supports which are aimed at enhancing wellbeing in accordance with the school's Mission Statement.



(Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines NCCA, 2021)

Coachford College endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment to enhance its students' self-esteem whilst offering students a chance to understand themselves better, allowing them to develop their own individual potential.

3.2.3 Learning for and about Wellbeing: Curricular Provision

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new area of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. Wellbeing crosses the three years of Junior Cycle and builds on the substantial work already taking place at the schools in support of students' wellbeing. This area of learning makes the school's culture and ethos and commitment to wellbeing visible to students. It includes learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. It enables students to build life skills and develop a strong sense of connectedness to their school and to their community.

Coachford College provides 400 hours of curricular Wellbeing to all students in keeping with the requirements of the Framework for Junior Cycle (DESk, 2015) and Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2021), through the key subject areas of Civic Social and Political Education, Social Personal and Health Education, Physical Education, Digital Media Learning and Guidance-related Learning. NCCA Short Courses are followed in SPHE, CSPE and PE.

The NCCA Senior Cycle SPHE curricular requirements are met at Senior Cycle.

The 24 Junior Cycle Statements of Learning, along with the 8 Principles of Junior Cycle, are central to planning for students' experience at Coachford College. The following Statements of Learning, relate explicitly to Wellbeing, and are central to informing school planning, policy and curriculum. They are:

- The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision-making (SOL 5);
- The student values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts (SOL 7);

- The student has the awareness, knowledge, skills and motivation to live sustainably (SOL 10);
- The student takes action to safeguard and promote his/her wellbeing and that of others (SOL 11);
- The student is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active (SOL 12);
- The student understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices (SOL 13).

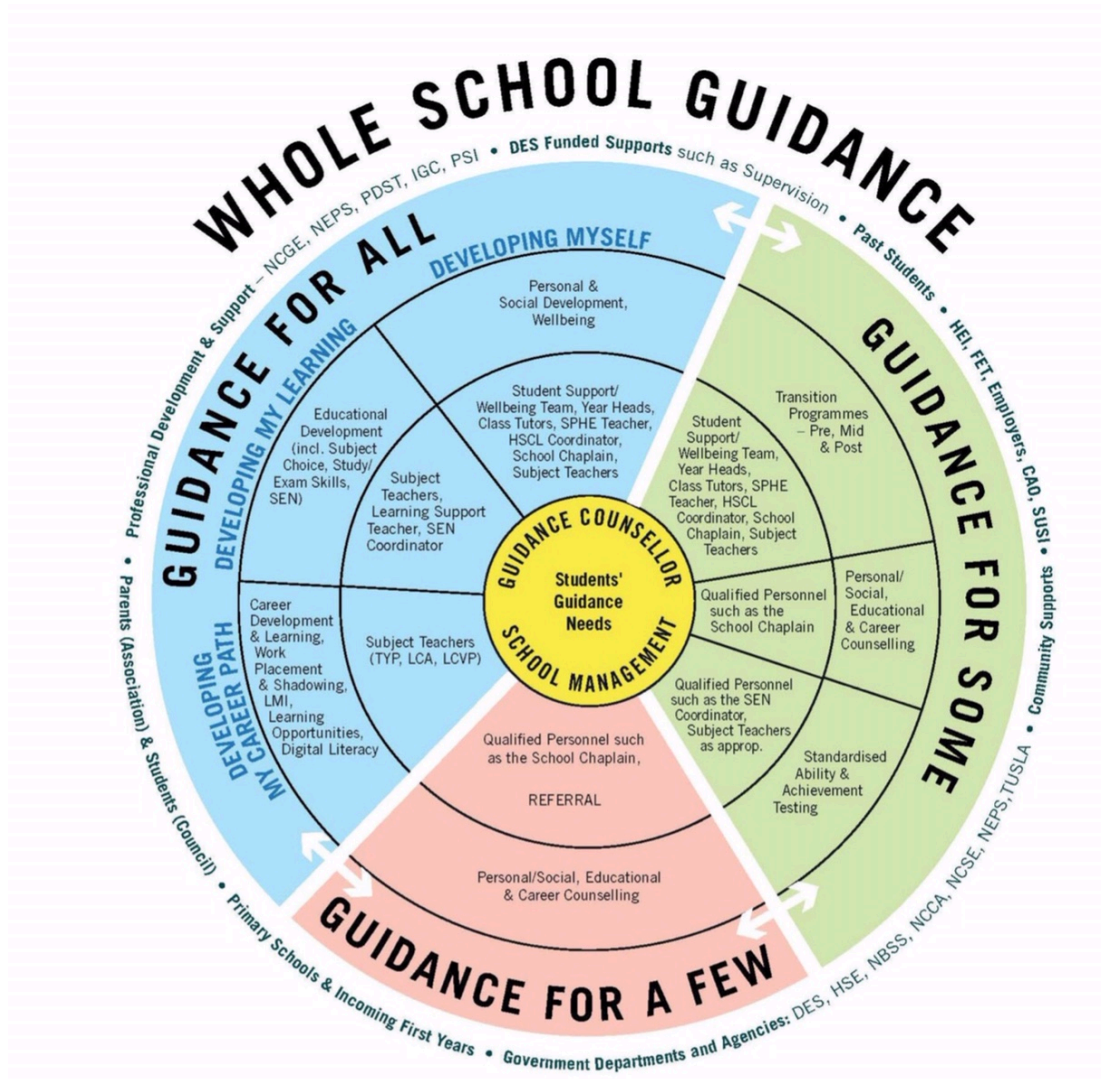
All subject planning incorporates wellbeing and teachers embed wellbeing into specifications and curricula and ensure it is visible to students.

3.2.4 Guidance-related Learning

Guidance in school refers to a range of learning experiences for students. It aims to develop their capacity for the self-management of their personal, social, educational and occupational life choices. Guidance aims to nurture the personal development of each student so they may grow towards their potential and therefore contribute to a better school community and in the future a better society. Guidance may be divided into three areas:

- Educational Guidance;
- Career Guidance,
- Personal Guidance.

Whole school Guidance-related learning is provided in the curriculum and in conjunction with SPHE. Guidance by its nature is delivered by all teachers in Coachford College. The Guidance Counsellor leads, co-ordinates and delivers the school guidance programme in collaboration with the school leadership team, teachers and key stakeholders in response to the Guidance needs of the students. Coachford College has adopted the Continuum of Support model for the whole school guidance programme. The guidance counsellor liaises with the well-being teachers in delivering four separate guidance focus weeks throughout the year for first and second year. Third year guidance is scheduled for one class per week and delivered by the guidance counsellors.



3.2.5 Wellbeing in Teaching and Learning

Mindful of the mixed ability settings in most classes, a variety of teaching approaches and methodologies are utilised to maintain student engagement and maximise learning and achievement. Emphasis is placed on the integration of technology into teaching and learning in the school, with the introduction of Digital Media Learning as a core Wellbeing subject across the two years of Junior Cycle, and in keeping with the aims and objectives of the school's Blended Learning Plan.

3.2.6 Team Teaching has by now been embedded into teaching and learning at Coachford College. Classes are organised in mixed ability groups. This serves to promote engagement and supporting the wellbeing in all classes. In keeping with best practice, this approach is central to the promotion of student wellbeing and self-esteem.

3.2.7 Promoting Wellbeing skills in students

Wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of place and belonging to a wider community.

The **Wellbeing Indicators** as set out in Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2021) are as follows – **Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected, and Aware.**



Coachford College aims to enable its students to become skilled in the following ways:

- Develop confidence in and enjoyment of physical activity;
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- Know when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices;
- Feel connected to their school, friends, community and the wider world;
- Understand how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local, global and online interactions contexts;
- Feel confident in themselves and having the coping skills to deal with life's challenges;
- Know where they can go for help – Student Support Team, Staff, Year Head, etc.;
- Believe that, with effort, they can achieve their potential, nurturing a growth mindset among students rather than a fixed mindset;
- Show care and respect for others;
- Have positive relationships with friends, peers, and staff members;
- Feel listened to and valued;
- Be aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and being able to make sense of them;
- Be aware of their personal values, and make informed decisions which they own ownership of,
- Be aware of themselves as learners, and know how they can improve.

3.2.8 Promoting and Supporting Culture of Wellbeing in our School

Coachford College promotes a warm, welcoming, encouraging and positive school culture in the following ways:

- Lunchtime activities which enable students to avail of quiet and reflective time are facilitated.
- The school promotes physical activity, and healthy eating choices.
- Teachers have high expectations for all students.
- There are open, positive, supportive relationships between teachers and students in class and outside.
- A culture of collaboration and cooperation is promoted through day to day teaching, learning and assessment practices.
- Students feel safe, secure and respected in their classrooms.
- Students are encouraged to actively engage in their learning so that they can enjoy being at school.
- Students receive regular formative feedback about their learning and how they can improve.
- Students have regular opportunities to talk about their learning and what helps them to learn.
- Teachers use active methodologies to develop the key skills in their subjects.
- Teaching and learning is differentiated and provides an appropriate challenge to enable all students to engage and experience success.
- Students are aware of who they should turn to if in need of support or if they are aware that another student is potentially at risk.
- The school's Child Safeguarding Statement is discussed with all students at the commencement of the school year, and again in Wellbeing classes. Child Safeguarding notices are posted in each year group's social area and in each classroom.
- The SPHE/RSE programmes aims to enhance learning in the area of relationships and sexuality in a caring and balanced manner.
- Supportive relationships with parents/guardians are nurtured in order to highlight, monitor, evaluate and promote student wellbeing. Regular feedback on learning is given to parents/guardians and students in keeping with the provision set out in the Reporting Guidelines (NCCA, 2018).
- Measurable targets for individual student wellbeing, in conjunction with students, teachers, SNAs, Year Heads and the Student Support Team through the use of the Domains and Standards set out in Looking at our Schools 2022.
- The school's Critical Incident Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy are reviewed annually.
- Wellbeing Programmes such as Kindness Week, Wellbeing Week, Anti-Bullying Programmes, Online Safety, Drug and Alcohol Awareness are facilitated.

3.2.9 Activities aimed at the promotion of Wellbeing

The wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities facilitated for students at Coachford College, aimed to promote wellbeing, include the following:

3.2.9.1 Co-Curricular activities

- Dance Off
- Poetry Competitions
- Maths Week
- Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Quizzes (Science, Maths, Irish, etc.)
- Posters on Wellbeing
- Kindness Week, Anti Bullying Week, etc.
- Transition Year School Trips

- Second Delphi Trip
- Wellbeing Initiatives for various year groups to help with exam pressures, etc.
- Wellbeing Week
- Books and Being
- Digital Literacy Week

3.2.9.2 Extra-Curricular Activities/Clubs/Societies

- Gaelic Football 1st Year, 2nd Year Junior & Senior
- Hurling 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior & Senior
- Camogie 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior (2), Senior (2)
- Ladies Football 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior (2) & Senior
- Ladies Basketball 1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior & Senior
- Fitness Programmes
- Athletics
- Road Bowling
- Equestrian
- Rowing
- Outdoor Education
- Robotics
- Coding
- Library
- Gaisce
- Green Schools
- Scifest
- Young Scientist
- School Bank
- Debating
- Camera Club
- School Choir
- Buddy Mentoring Programmes
- Student Council
- Games Club
- Recreational Badminton
- Homework Club
- Gaelbhratach
- Choir
- Diospóireacht Gael Linn
- Modern Foreign conversational club
- Think Languages
- Active Flag
- Certified Irish Angus School competition
- School Weather Station
- Stem Showcase Expo
- Young Scientist Competition
- The Expression Magazine
- Coill na nÓg Competition
- Carepack
- Gaeilge 24
- Trad band
- Junior Bookclub
- School Bank

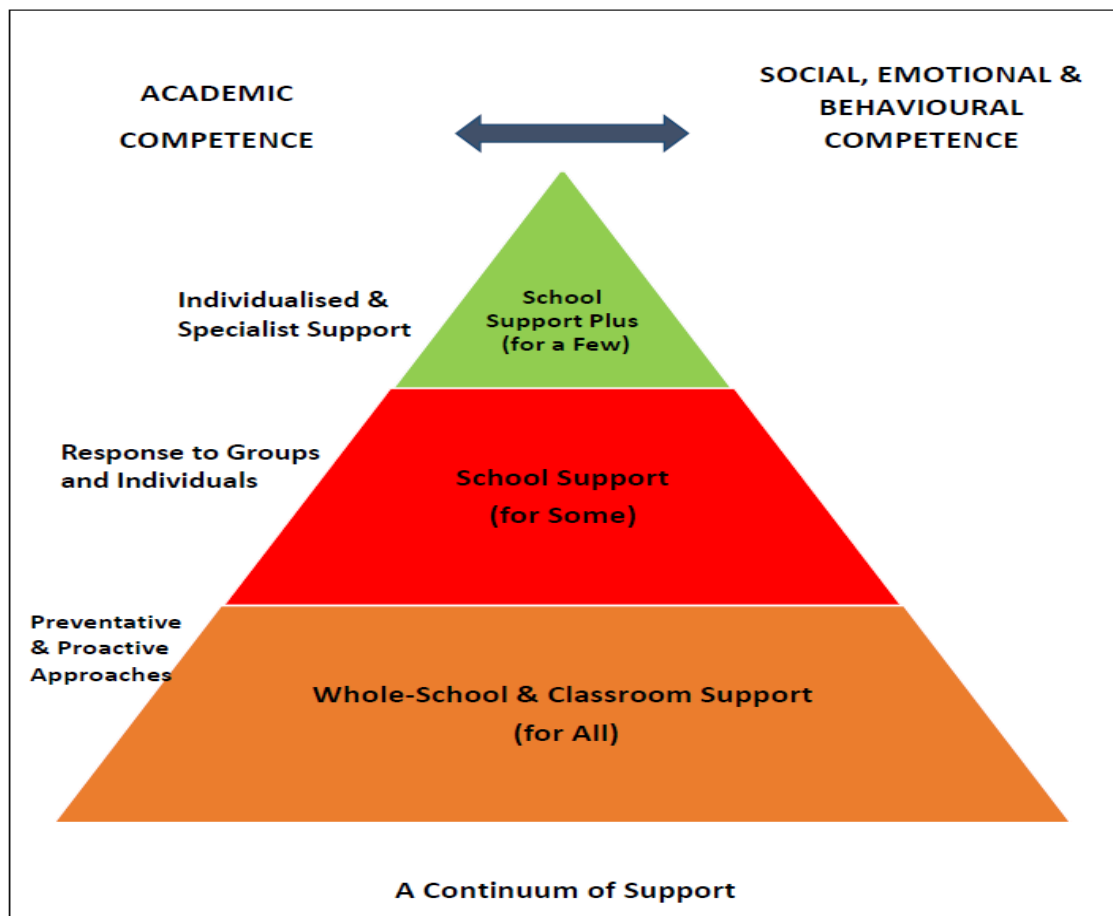
- Active Retirement activities with TY Buddies

3.2.9.3 Social Events

- Christmas Concerts
- Christmas events, e.g. Quiz
- Leaving Certificate Graduation Ceremony
- Awards Ceremonies
- Graduation Dance

These lists are by no means exhaustive.

3.3 Continuum of Support



(National Educational Psychological Service)

3.3.1 Support for All

Coachford College adopts a whole-school approach to wellbeing, and has in place a series of policies and procedures which aim to:

1. Create a safe environment which helps students that is conducive to wellbeing and which supports the prevention of factors that negatively impact on wellbeing;
2. Promote an understanding of and commitment to wellbeing;
3. Support early identification and intervention in the cases of challenge. These steps are reflected in various school policies such as the Appropriate Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, etc. and are supported by the school's commitment to quality teaching and learning, broad curricular provision, learning supports, and a whole school approach to assessment, feedback and reporting.

3.3.2 Support for Some

There is a more focused approach adopted with several identifiable groups of young people who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour. These structures seek to provide a more targeted support structure to promote and scaffold wellbeing for these identified groups.

Supports which are available include a proactive Student Support Team who employ a range of different supports and interventions ranging from individual counselling to a comprehensive referral system, as follows:

- AEN individual support and team teaching;
- Guidance Counselling;
- Chaplaincy;
- Year Head, etc.

3.3.3 Support for a Few

Coachford College has support in place which focuses on interventions for young people with more complex and enduring needs. Work with this group of students is structured under the development of a Care Plan which may include assisting in the development of student skills in the areas of self-esteem, resilience, self-care and overall positive self-development. In some cases, students under the care of the Student Support Team may be referred for additional support of outside agencies.

3.4 Relationships and Wellbeing

Coachford College recognises that true wellbeing can only be assured through the promotion and development of positive, nurturing and respectful relationships within the school community.

Coachford College strives to achieve this in the following ways:

- Ensuring that student-teacher relationships are friendly, caring and respectful;
- Building an emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour enhances the whole school community;
- Ensuring that Student Voice has a central place in all school planning and review, and that students' are not only heard but acted upon;
- Ensuring that staff members are aware that they may be the One Good Adult to whom a student turns to for support and help during a difficult time. In turn always being cognizant of providing support to staff when they are dealing with vulnerable students and ensuring that staff members know who they can turn to when they need advice and support;
- Just like when there are difficult times in students' lives, equally there are times when staff are vulnerable and experiencing their own life challenges. Coachford College aims to create a community which is compassionate and considerate of each other's feelings, non-judgemental and always cognizant that we never know exactly what our colleagues may be going through at any given time. This compassion cascades throughout the school community;
- Fully informing students as to where to get support and how to access the care structures in the school;
- Resolving behaviour issues with care, respect and consistency;
- Ensuring that there is a shared vision and understanding of what student wellbeing means which emphasises strengths and capacities;
- Encouraging students to show respect, care and concern for each other so that they feel safe and supported amongst their peers.
- Providing forums for students so that their voices may be heard and they are involved in making decisions about their life in school;
- Actively encouraging student voice, providing appropriate platforms for student feedback and ensuring that students know that their feedback is valued and, where appropriate, acted upon;

- Ensuring that parents/guardians feel welcome, respected, and listened to as partners in the education of their children;
- Sharing information with parents/guardians, as appropriate, with a view to supporting them in supporting their child's wellbeing;
- Maintaining strong links with the local community;
- Wellbeing is reflected strongly in our curricular provision: There is a coherent and coordinated approach to the provision of CSPE, PE, SPHE, Digital Media Learning and Guidance as part of the Wellbeing programme at Junior Cycle.
- Teachers are supported in working collaboratively in the planning for these subjects, and Continuous Professional Learning is actively supported.
- Curricular provision is informed by feedback from students, parents/guardians, teachers who have collectively and collaboratively compiled the **identified needs** which in turn inform the school's Wellbeing Plan.
- The Parents' Council provides an important forum for feedback from parents/guardians, and has a key voice in the planning of school curriculum and policy.

3.5 Workplace Wellbeing

The staff of Coachford College work in an environment of collegiality and support, teaching support and ancillary staff work in an ever-changing environment educationally, socially and culturally. Coachford College actively seeks to maintain its integral identity of cohesiveness, friendship and respect for one another in an ever-changing environment. Coachford College recognises the value of investing in all its staff, aiming to inspire trust and encourage collaboration, in keeping with the school's mission statement and that of Cork Education and Training Board. Workplace practices are guided by Looking at our Schools 2022 and the school's Dignity in the Workplace Charter as well as national legislation, DEY, Cork ETB and school policy.

An Occupational Health Strategy is in place as a supportive resource for teachers and Special Needs Assistants. The aim of the strategy is to promote the health of employees in the workplace with a focus on prevention rather than cure. The Occupational Health Strategy comprises the employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme and Occupational Health Service. The service is available as a free confidential service which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. It is accessible through a Freephone Helpline, the details of which are available at www.education.ie/Employee Assistance Service. Contact details are made available to staff via the Staff Handbook.

3.6 Links with School Policies

All school policies directly relate to Wellbeing and are reviewed regularly through the lens of wellbeing, as set out in 1.2 above.

3.7 Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management of Coachford College is committed to the supporting and development of student potential in keeping with the school's mission statement. The Board seeks to promote a caring and committed school community where everyone is valued as unique, in keeping with the school's mission and characteristic spirit. The core aim of the school's curriculum, policy and planning is to develop the whole person, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, spiritual and physical. All relationships in the school community are built on the central tenet of respect.

Coachford College endeavours to meet the wellbeing needs of its staff and students. Wellbeing by its nature is constantly evolving. This Policy seeks to provide the scaffolding and framework so that all members of the school community and stakeholders can build on and add to this process. In recognition of this, this Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Strand 4 Physical Health

4.1 Introduction

Coachford College is committed to promoting the physical health, activity, and overall wellbeing of every student. Physical health is an essential component of whole-school wellbeing and is central to the school's mission to support students in developing their full potential.

This strand aligns with the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (NCCA, 2016), the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015), and the school's Wellbeing Policy. It emphasises physical activity, healthy lifestyle habits, inclusive participation, safety, and the development of lifelong physical and health-related skills.

4.2 Aims & Objectives of Strand 4

1. Promote regular physical activity and enjoyment of movement
2. Encourage students to adopt healthy lifestyle habits
3. Provide inclusive sporting opportunities for all students
4. Support skill development, teamwork, cooperation, and resilience
5. Ensure safe, supervised, and developmentally appropriate physical activity
6. Strengthen links between physical health and emotional wellbeing
7. Foster a culture where students feel confident and competent in physical activity
8. Facilitate students to build relationships with their peers

These aims contribute directly to the Wellbeing Indicators: **Active, Resilient, Responsible, Connected, Respected, and Aware.**

4.3 Physical Education (PE) Provision

Coachford College provides high-quality PE instruction to all year groups as part of its Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle wellbeing programme.

PE aims:

- Builds physical competence and confidence
- Develops fitness, movement, and coordination
- Encourages teamwork and cooperation
- Promotes physical literacy and awareness of healthy choices
- Contributes to the 400 hours of Junior Cycle Wellbeing provision

PE is supported through the NCCA Short Course in Physical Education at Junior Cycle.

4.4 Extracurricular Physical Activities & Sports

Coachford College offers an extensive range of extracurricular sports and fitness opportunities, contributing significantly to students' physical health.

4.4.1 Full List of Sports Teams & Activities

GAA Sports

- Gaelic Football (1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior, Senior)
- Hurling (1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior, Senior)
- Camogie (1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior teams, Senior teams)
- Ladies Football (1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior, Senior)

Indoor & Court Sports

- Ladies Basketball (1st Year, 2nd Year, Junior, Senior)
- Volleyball

Athletic Activities

- Athletics
- Running/Walking Track (school facility)

Outdoor Education & Adventure

- Outdoor Education
- Rowing
- Road Bowling
- Equestrian

Other Physical-Activity Clubs

- Robotics
 - Coding
- (While not sport-based, these clubs support balance, coordination, and fine motor skill development indirectly.)

These programmes foster teamwork, motivation, resilience, school spirit, and enjoyment of physical activity.

4.5 Active School Flag (ASF)

Coachford College is working under the **Active School Flag** initiative, promoting:

- Increased physical activity levels across the school day
- Movement breaks
- Student-led physical activity challenges
- Whole-school events promoting active living

ASF strengthens the culture of physical wellbeing and supports our vision of daily activity for all students.

4.6 Healthy Eating & Nutrition

Coachford College promotes healthy lifestyle habits through its comprehensive **Healthy Eating Policy**, which supports students' physical, cognitive, and emotional wellbeing.

Key elements of the policy include:

4.6.1 Whole-School Healthy Eating Approach

- Consistent positive messages about healthy eating across the curriculum
- Posters, displays, and Healthy Eating Day
- Use of school social media to promote nutrition awareness
- Student Council involvement in guiding healthy eating decisions
- Guest speakers and external resources such as the HSE and FSAI

4.6.2 Nutrition & Curriculum Links

Healthy eating education is delivered through:

- **SPHE**
- **Home Economics**
- **Science**
- **Physical Education**

Lessons promote understanding of balanced nutrition, food literacy, hydration, and the link between healthy eating and physical performance.

4.6.3 School Bistro Standards

The school bistro:

- Provides healthy hot meals, sandwiches, wraps, bagels, and nutritious snacks
- Sells only water, flavoured water, milk, and flavoured milk
- Does **not** sell fizzy drinks, energy drinks, crisps, chocolate, sweets, or breakfast rolls
- Prioritises nutritious, balanced options aligned with DE guidance on healthy lifestyles

4.6.4 Lunch Guidelines

- Students are encouraged to bring healthy, balanced lunches
- Fizzy drinks, energy drinks, caffeine drinks, chewy bars, sweets, lollipops, and nuts are not permitted
- Water is strongly encouraged to support concentration, physical energy, and hydration
- Parents are supported in making informed nutritional choices for their children

This policy strengthens the school's physical wellbeing strand by reinforcing daily habits that support long-term health.

4.7 Physical Health Promotion & Healthy Lifestyles

Through SPHE, PE, and whole-school practice, Coachford College promotes:

- Understanding nutrition and diet
- Awareness of personal safety and risk management
- Building healthy lifestyle habits
- Developing food literacy and informed decision-making
- Active participation in school and community physical activities

4.8 School Facilities Supporting Physical Health

Coachford College benefits from a range of facilities that support physical activity:

- Sports Hall
- GAA/Soccer Pitch
- The Walkway
- Changing Rooms
- PE Equipment and resources

These facilities allow for a diverse programme of sport and physical education.

4.9 External Community & Sports Partnerships

The school maintains strong links with local and national sports organisations, including:

- Local GAA clubs
- FAI (soccer)
- Athletics clubs
- Rowing clubs
- Outdoor activity centres
- Health promotion services (HSE)

These partnerships expand sporting opportunities and enhance student participation.

4.10 Safety, Supervision & Risk Management

Coachford College ensures that all physical activity is delivered safely by:

- Conducting risk assessments for PE and extracurricular activities
- Ensuring appropriate student-to-staff supervision ratios
- Maintaining safe equipment and facilities
- Ensuring staff are trained in first aid and aware of AED procedures
- Following the school's Safety Statement and Accident/Incident reporting structures

Safety is prioritised in all school-based and off-site physical activities.

4.11 Inclusion in Physical Activity

Coachford College is committed to ensuring that sport and physical activity are accessible to **all** students, including those with:

- Additional Educational Needs
- Physical or mobility challenges
- Neurodiverse profiles
- Low confidence or limited prior participation

Activities are differentiated where needed and all students are encouraged to participate in a way that suits their abilities.

4.12 Annual Review and Evaluation

This strand will be reviewed annually as part of the school's Wellbeing and Guidance planning processes.

The review will consider:

- Student participation rates
- ASF activity levels
- Range and suitability of sports offered
- Student voice feedback
- Safety and supervision standards
- Facility needs and maintenance
- Opportunities for expansion or improvement

Findings will inform targets for the following school year.

Strand 5: Inclusion & Diversity

5.1 Introduction

Coachford College is committed to fostering a school environment where every student feels safe, valued, respected, and included. Our school recognises the richness that diversity brings to the learning community and affirms the right of all students to equitable access to education regardless of cultural background, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, or family circumstance.

Inclusion and diversity are central to our mission and align closely with our school values of **Respect, Equality and Care**. Strand 5 seeks to ensure that these values are meaningfully embedded in everyday practice across the school.

5.2 Legislative and Policy Framework

This strand is informed by the following legislation and national policy guidelines:

- **Equal Status Acts 2000–2015** – promoting equality across nine protected grounds
- **Education Act 1998** – ensuring that all students have equal access to an appropriate education
- **Children First Act 2015** and *Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools*
- **Wellbeing Framework for Post-Primary Schools (2017)**
- **Department of Education Inclusion Guidelines and Circulars**

Coachford College is committed to upholding these principles in its policies, procedures, and daily practices.

5.3 Objectives of Strand 5

Strand 5 aims to:

1. Promote a culture of respect, empathy, and appreciation for difference
2. Ensure equal access to participation and learning for all students
3. Foster compassion as a core school value
4. Support students who may feel marginalised or underrepresented
5. Encourage student voice and student-led inclusion initiatives
6. Strengthen staff capacity to support diverse learners and identities
7. Ensure that diversity is acknowledged, visible, and celebrated appropriately

5.4 Diversity within Coachford College

We acknowledge and embrace the diversity present within our school community, including:

- Students from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- LGBTQ+ students
- Students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN), including those supported through our the HUB class and AEN department
- Students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds
- Students with different learning styles, strengths, and personal circumstances

Recognising the uniqueness of each learner promotes a culture of acceptance and dignity within our school.

5.5 Current Supports & Inclusive Structures

Coachford College already has strong systems in place that support an inclusive school environment:

5.5.1 The Hub Class & Additional Educational Needs Department

- Provides targeted support for students with additional needs
- Ensures access to differentiated learning
- Collaborates with teachers, SNAs, families, and external agencies
- Promotes independence, participation, and a sense of belonging

5.5.2 Student Support Team

- Meets regularly to monitor student wellbeing
- Coordinates interventions and referrals where necessary
- Ensures early identification of students who may require support

5.5.3 Buddy Programme

- TY students support first years in settling into school life
- Promotes social integration, confidence, and peer-to-peer connection

5.5.4 Anti-Bullying: “See It, Say It, Sort It”

- Reinforces that all students have a responsibility to act when they witness bullying
- Encourages safe reporting through trusted adults
- Strengthens a culture of collective responsibility and care

5.5.5 Inclusive SPHE/RSE Provision

- LGBTQ+ safety, respect, and awareness are addressed through the curriculum
- Lessons promote empathy, understanding, healthy relationships, and inclusive language

5.6 Activities

- **Kindness Week** promoting empathy and small acts of care
- **Intercultural Food Day** or a small “Try Something New” cultural event
- **Display of Flags** representing different cultures within the school

5.7 SPHE Activities

- Understanding difference
- How to support peers who feel excluded
- Bystander intervention linked to *See It, Say It, Sort It*
- Empathy-building discussions

5.8 Student Voice

- Use the Student Council to gather feedback and propose suggestions
- Provide leadership opportunities for students who wish to promote kindness and inclusion

5.9 Collaboration with Parents & Community

Coachford College values the role of parents/guardians in shaping an inclusive environment. We commit to:

- Maintaining open communication about supports, policies and school initiatives
- Providing guidance to parents seeking advice on inclusion matters
- Encouraging parent involvement in intercultural or community-based activities where appropriate

5.10 Monitoring & Review

An annual review of Strand 5 will be completed by a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (or Inclusion Coordinator). This will include:

- Feedback from students and staff
- Review of initiatives implemented
- Identification of one new achievable target for the following year
- Ensuring alignment with any updated legislation or Department of Education guidelines

This review will be presented at the appropriate planning meeting and incorporated into the overall evaluation of the School Guidance Plan.

Strand 6: Student Leadership

6.1 Introduction

Coachford College recognises that student leadership is a vital part of whole-school development. Leadership opportunities enable students to contribute positively to the school community, develop confidence and strengthen skills such as communication, responsibility, empathy, problemsolving, and collaboration.

Strand 6 reflects our commitment to fostering student voice, participation, and shared responsibility, in alignment with the core values of **Excellence, Care, Equality, Community, and Mutual Respect**.

6.2 Purpose of Student Leadership

Student leadership in Coachford College aims to:

1. Promote active participation in school life
2. Encourage responsibility and autonomy in students
3. Strengthen relationships between students, staff, and school management
4. Develop confidence, communication, and organisational skills
5. Provide structured opportunities for students to have a meaningful voice
6. Foster empathy, teamwork, and a sense of belonging
7. Create accessible leadership opportunities for all year groups

6.3 Structures of Student Leadership in Coachford College

Coachford College promotes student leadership through a range of programmes and roles.

6.3.1 Student Council

The Student Council is the central student leadership body in the school and plays a key role in representing student views.

Key functions include:

- Acting as the voice of the student body
- Contributing to school policy development
- Working in partnership with management, staff, and parents
- Organising student-led initiatives and events
- Promoting communication within the school community

The Student Council operates according to the **Coachford College Student Council Policy (2023)** and adheres to Section 27 of the Education Act (1998).

6.3.2 Buddy Programme

The Buddy Programme supports the transition of first-year students into post-primary education. Transition Year students volunteer to act as guides, mentors, and supportive peers.

Benefits include:

- Reducing anxiety for incoming students
- Supporting students with the practicalities of school life
- Encouraging positive peer relationships
- Providing senior students with structured leadership experience

6.3.3 Leadership in Extracurricular Activities

Students often take on informal or formal leadership roles in:

- Sports teams
- Music, drama, or arts groups
- Clubs and extracurricular activities
- School events or wellbeing initiatives

These experiences help students develop teamwork, initiative, resilience, and responsibility.

6.3.4 Student Voice Initiatives

Coachford College values students as partners in school development. Student voice is enhanced through:

- Surveys and feedback instruments
- Student focus groups
- Participation in policy development
- Contributions to school events

These opportunities empower students to influence school culture in positive ways

6.3.5 School Podcast

The School Podcast Club supports the development of student leadership by providing opportunities for students to take responsibility for planning, recording and producing podcast episodes. Through these roles, students build skills in communication, collaboration and project management while contributing meaningfully to the wider school community. By engaging with school initiatives and leading discussions on topics of interest, students develop confidence, initiative and a strong sense of ownership over their work.

6.3.6 The Expression Magazine:

TY Students in journalism class produce the Expression Magazine. The magazine serves as an important vehicle for promoting student leadership within the school community. Through their involvement in planning, producing and managing each issue, students take on meaningful responsibilities that develop their communication, organisation, and decision-making skills. Participation in The Expression encourages collaboration, initiative and accountability, as students work together to meet deadlines, uphold quality standards, and represent the student voice with integrity.

6.4 LIFT Leadership Programme

As of 2025-26 Coachford College facilitates the **LIFT (Leading Ireland's Future Together) Leadership Programme** as part of its commitment to developing a values-based culture of leadership.

LIFT Ireland is a national initiative that builds character, responsibility, and leadership capacity through short, reflective sessions based on core values such as:

- Respect
- Positive Attitude
- Empathy
- Accountability
- Determination
- Integrity
- Competence

6.4.1 Purpose of Introducing LIFT

LIFT will complement Coachford College's existing leadership structures by:

- Providing a consistent, values-driven language across the school
- Supporting personal development and wellbeing
- Training students in reflective and responsible leadership
- Enhancing programmes such as the Buddy Programme and Student Council
- Offering leadership experiences that are accessible to all students

6.4.2 Implementation Plan

Coachford College plans to:

- Train a group of teachers as **LIFT Facilitators**
- Implement LIFT with specific groups initially (e.g., TY, Student Council, Buddies)
- Develop **LIFT Youth Leaders** among senior students
- Expand gradually based on engagement and capacity
- Integrate LIFT values into wellbeing activities

6.4.3 Expected Benefits

- Increased empathy, self-awareness, and communication skills
- A more positive, respectful school atmosphere
- Stronger peer relationships
- Enhanced student readiness for leadership roles
- Greater alignment with the school's values and wellbeing framework

6.4.4 Review of LIFT Programme

At year-end, the school will review:

- Student engagement and feedback
- Impact on culture and behaviour
- Integration with existing programmes

- Recommendations for further development

6.5 Supporting Students in Leadership Roles

Coachford College supports student leadership by:

- Providing mentoring and structure for student leaders
- Offering training where appropriate
- Encouraging an inclusive approach to leadership
- Promoting collaboration and communication
- Recognising and celebrating student contributions

6.6 Annual Review and Evaluation

Strand 6 will be reviewed annually as part of the whole-school evaluation of the Guidance Plan. The review will focus on:

- Participation in leadership programmes
- Effectiveness of the Student Council
- Operation of the Buddy Programme
- Introduction and impact of the LIFT Programme
- Student feedback
- Recommendations for the following school year

Strand 7: Chaplaincy

7.1 Introduction

The chaplaincy model at Coachford College has been developed in line with the school's ethos, Mission Statement and characteristic spirit, and is informed by the requirements of the Education Act (1998) Education Welfare Act (2000), the Chaplaincy and Coordinator of Chaplaincy Services of designated Community Colleges and Final Agreed Statement of Characteristic Spirit of a designated Community College, A Whole School Guidance Framework (NCGE, 2017), Framework for Junior Cycle (DESk, 2015), Guidelines for Wellbeing at Junior Cycle (NCCA, 2016), Looking at our School: A Quality Framework 2016-2020 (DESk, 2016), School Self-Evaluation Guidelines 2016-2020 (DESk, 2016), Digital Strategy for Schools (DESk, 2015), and the NEPS Continuum of Support.

7.2 Definition of Term

The term Chaplain in this document includes:

A priest, diocesan or religious, duly licensed by the Competent Religious Authority, who has been nominated for Chaplaincy duties by the Diocese of Cloyne.

Or

A duly qualified lay person or religious person who is not in holy orders and has been appointed for Chaplaincy duties.

7.3 Chaplaincy Vision

The Chaplain works in harmony with the students, teachers, families, school leadership team, communities and parishes of the students. The Chaplain seeks to know all the students within the school and endeavours to meet some individually when necessary.

The Chaplain aims to encourage and foster an awareness of spirituality within the school to provide the students with an opportunity to express their own religious or non-religious views. The Chaplain aims to be available to all members of the school community and to develop an open and trusting relationship with all those with whom they come in contact.

7.4 Objectives

It is the objectives of the Chaplain to:

1. Be a person of faith in the school community;
2. Be available to the whole school community as someone to confide in, who listens and cares;
3. Work with the school leadership team and the Student Support Team to promote a positive, living and enriching school ethos;
4. Engage in the formulation and execution of school policy which relates to Wellbeing and the holistic development of students;
5. Follow up on student referrals from the Student Support Team, teachers, SNAs and parents/guardians;
6. Celebrate the key events in the church's liturgical calendar and providing opportunities for staff and students to celebrate their faith;
7. Teach Religious Education and work closely with the school's RE team.

7.5 Role of the Chaplain

The role of Chaplain involves establishing positive relationships within the school community. The Chaplain is called to act collaboratively with all members of the school community.

The Chaplain undertakes a pastoral role through:

1. Personal contact, offering support to individual students;
2. Access to classes and small groups;
3. Liaising with, supporting and being available/present to staff members;
4. Communicating with and supporting parents/guardians;
5. Being available to students and staff members around the school for informal communication;
6. Maintaining close links with the local people of all faiths and encourage their visits to and involvement with the school.

The Chaplain's work involves close liaison with the Senior Leadership Team, Student Support Team, students and staff. The Student Support Team meets on a weekly basis to plan for the support of students deemed to be in need/at risk. Student support helps students in crisis by exploring and developing a range of coping strategies and interventions, in a thoughtful and caring way, as deemed appropriate to the student's individual needs.

7.6 Liturgy

Chaplains make the faith dimension of their work explicit through their own frequent involvement in the Eucharist and other liturgies. The Chaplain endeavours, where possible, to ensure that the liturgical life of the school is well celebrated in an inclusive manner.

7.7 Evaluation

In line with the requirements of the School Self Evaluation process, the Chaplain reviews and evaluates at the end of the conclusion of term, and plans accordingly.

7.8 Chaplaincy Meetings

No matter what stage in life we are at, all of us require support at times. The Chaplain provides an open door where students, as well as other members of the school community, can come and receive support in a confidential and safe way. Many students will use this open door as their first step to dealing with a problem or seeking help.

At times the Chaplain may believe another member of staff or counsellor may be of help to the student and with their permission may refer them to another support person. The School Chaplain works closely with the Guidance Counsellor, Class Tutors and Year Heads. The Chaplain also works in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team to promote the wellbeing of all.

7.9 Continuous Professional Learning

In keeping with the requirements of Looking at our Schools: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools, The Chaplain seeks and avails of TPL opportunities in their area of work.

7.10 Confidentiality, Data and Child Safeguarding

The Chaplain, like the Guidance Team, handles, stores, transfers and disposes of all records securely, in a manner which safeguards the student's right to privacy, and in keeping with the requirements of the school's Data Protection Policy and Cork ETB's Data Retention Schedule. In obtaining information

from or about a student or colleague, the chaplain addresses only that which may be necessary for the person's welfare.

Confidentiality is secured from the beginning of the relationship. This confidentiality can only be broken in certain circumstances; these apply if the chaplain evaluates that the student is a danger to self or others or "in danger to themselves or others". In the case where a chaplain deems it necessary to breach confidentiality, this will be done with the student's knowledge and this is seen as an extension of care rather than a breach of confidentiality. Precedence is given at all times to the requirements of the Child Safeguarding Act 2017.

This Plan was drawn up in consultation with all school partners. It will be reviewed regularly as deemed necessary. It will be made available to all school partners on request.

The Plan was reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College on May 06th 2026, and was ratified having been signed by the Chairperson and the Principal.



Chairperson of the Board

Date: 06.05.2026



Principal

Date: 06.05.2026