

OIDE GUIDANCE

NEWSLETTER

TERM 1 ISSUE 2025



SUPPORTING WHOLE-SCHOOL GUIDANCE (WSG)

Welcome back to a new academic year! We look forward to working together with Guidance Counsellors, WSG teams, and all staff in strengthening whole-school guidance to support every student's learning, wellbeing, and future pathways.

OIDE GUIDANCE TEAM UPDATES

Barry Nolan, Divisional Director Droichead Induction leads the Oide Guidance team in 2025/26. In addition, Niamh Uí Thuama Professional Learning Leader joins Oide Guidance team this year.



Barry Nolan
Divisional Director
Droichead Induction



Joanne Parry
Professional Learning Leader



Sinéad Duffy
Professional Learning Leader



Niamh Uí Thuama
Professional Learning Leader



Oide

Tacaíocht le haghaidh
Gharraíocht i measc Ceannairc
Scolaire agus Mairbh

Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers

Pathways: Supporting Guidance Counsellors for Inclusive 21st Century Student Progression

We are delighted to announce that Guidance will again be offered as a **professional learning experience** (PLE) on the school closure subject cluster days in 2025/26.

This year's PLE is entitled **Pathways: Supporting Guidance Counsellors for inclusive 21st century Student Progression**.

Booking takes place at school level and please ensure that your school leadership is aware that there is a Guidance option now for the school closure subject cluster days again this year.



Senior Cycle Redevelopment
Schools Information Note
August 2025 Issue 12



The Department of Education and Youth has issued the twelfth edition of Senior Cycle Redevelopment Schools Information Note. For full text, click [here](#).

SUPPORTING WHOLE-SCHOOL GUIDANCE (WSG)



In our schools, guidance doesn't just happen in the guidance office. Each conversation, subject, and classroom experience has the potential to foster students' confidence, aspirations, and readiness for progression.

EMPOWERING EVERY EDUCATOR TO SHAPE STUDENT FUTURES

In every classroom, corridor conversation, and learning moment, students are building the skills, values, and confidence that will shape their lives beyond school. This newsletter is here to support all staff, not just guidance counsellors, in recognising the vital role we each play in preparing students for life, learning, and work.

By connecting subject learning to real-world skills, encouraging reflection, and embedding inclusive guidance moments into everyday practice, we can ensure every student sees possibility in their future. Let's explore how small, intentional actions across the school can make a lasting impact.

GUIDANCE IN ACTION: WHAT WHOLE-SCHOOL GUIDANCE LOOKS LIKE

Examples of guidance moments across the school:

- A teacher offering reflection time on skills used in a group project.
- A tutor encouraging TY students to research careers.
- A maths lesson using real job salaries to teach percentages.

You might not recognise it, but when you.....

- Encourage a student to reflect on their strengths, that's guidance.
- Link your subject to real-world applications, that's guidance.
- Help a student plan a project timeline, that's guidance.

WHOLE-SCHOOL GUIDANCE (WSG): WHAT EVERY STAFF MEMBER NEEDS TO KNOW BASED ON **INFORMATION NOTE 0001/2024**

Guidance isn't just a subject or a role, it's a shared school-wide responsibility. Whether you're teaching, mentoring, coaching or greeting students at the gate, you are part of a student's journey of self-discovery and progression. Whole-school guidance (WSG) recognises the unique role all staff play in supporting personal, social, educational and career development.

What Does WSG Look Like in Action?

It could be:

- Study skills sessions in English or Science
- Project-based learning with real-world links in Maths or Geography
- Reflection tasks in TY, SPHE or during Wellbeing time
- Highlighting transferable skills (teamwork, communication, problem-solving) in any subject
- Career conversations sparked by classroom topics, posters, or guest speakers.

Planning for WSG in Your Department

- Identify where 21st-century skills are already being developed
- Ask: "Where does this topic link to the world of work?"
- Add one reflection task per term to help students build self-awareness
- Share what you're doing with the guidance team, it strengthens our school's whole-school guidance plan! Schools can use this [prompt sheet](#) to help capture what's already happening.

Small Actions, Big Impact

- Display a careers poster related to your subject.
- Invite past students to talk about their career paths.
- Reinforce skills students can use beyond school: resilience, research, leadership...

Your Role Empowers Student Futures

WSG is inclusive, developmental and flexible. Every staff member can contribute to a culture where students feel seen, supported and prepared for life after school.

Let's make guidance visible, reflective and real.

Need support or want to contribute more? Link in with your school's WSG planning team or Guidance Counsellor.

"GUIDANCE IS NOT SOMETHING EXTRA. IT'S ALREADY HAPPENING.
WHEN WE NAME IT, STUDENTS VALUE IT."

WSG has been promoted in post-primary schools for many years. Activities, such as study skills week, Transition Year subject-taster days, and work-experience preparation and reflection, are examples of WSG which have been part of school life for decades. WSG acknowledges that all school staff have a role in providing guidance to students and this should be acknowledged and reflected in: (i) a school's WSG plan and (ii) individual subject department plans. Examples of how this may be achieved are outlined in Appendix 1 and 2 of [Information Note 0001/2024](#).

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

FOUNDATIONAL LITERACIES

How students apply core skills to everyday tasks.



COMPETENCIES

How students approach complex challenges.



CHARACTER QUALITIES

How students approach their everyday changing environment.



Lifelong Learning

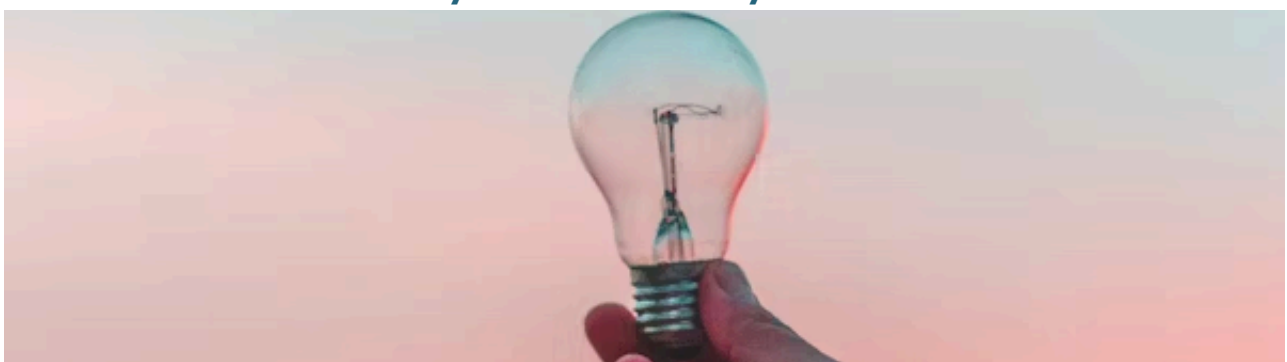
Image: World Economic Forum, New Vision for Education (2015)

In today's fast-changing world, students need more than knowledge, they need the skills to adapt, collaborate, think critically, communicate clearly, and manage themselves. These are the 21st-century skills that employers value and young people need to thrive in learning, work, and life.

When we help students recognise and reflect on the skills they're building, whether through a science project, a group discussion, or managing their time, we're giving them the tools to shape their own futures with confidence and clarity.

By making skills visible and meaningful in our subjects, we build not just competence, but agency, the belief that "I have something to offer, and I know how to grow."

Whole-school guidance lives in these moments. They help students connect who they are with who they can become.



FOUNDATIONAL LITERACIES

How students apply core skills to everyday tasks

Skills	Subjects*	Examples
Literacy	English, History, MFL	Debates, essays, report writing, comprehension of information sources.
Numeracy	Maths, Business, Science	Budgeting, interpreting data, statistical analysis.
Scientific Literacy	Science, Home Economics, Geography	Designing experiments, analysing health/environmental data.
Digital Literacy	Digital Media, Computer Science, TY Modules	Using productivity tools, creating digital presentations, safe online research.
Financial Literacy	Business, Maths, Life, Community and Work Specification (formerly LCVP)	Income vs expenses, savings vs borrowing, understanding payslips.
Civic & Cultural Literacy	CSPE, Religion, SPHE, MFL	Exploring social issues, active citizenship intercultural understanding.

**subjects listed as an example but in no way limited to these areas.*

COMPETENCIES

HOW STUDENTS APPROACH COMPLEX CHALLENGES

Skills	Subjects*	Examples
Critical Thinking / Problem Solving	Maths, Science, Business, History	Solving open-ended problems, evaluating sources, designing experiments.
Creativity	Art, English, Music, Technology	Producing original content, innovative design challenges, creative writing.
Communication	English, MFL, SPHE	Speeches, interviews, group presentations, oral fluency.
Collaboration	All (especially group projects)	Team assignments, peer feedback, enterprise or STEAM challenges.

**subjects listed as an example but in no way limited to these areas.*

Student Reflection Prompts

"What skill did I use today?"
 "How could this apply in real life or work?"
 "What job or career uses the kind of thinking I used in this task?"
 "What challenged me today, and how did I respond?"
 "What would I do differently next time?"
 "What's one skill I want to build on?"
 "How has this influenced my thinking about future subjects, courses, or careers?"

Student Voice and Reflection Are Core

WSG includes empowering students to reflect on their strengths, choices, and growth. Reflection promotes agency, the sense that they are in charge of their future.

CHARACTER QUALITIES

HOW STUDENTS APPROACH THEIR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Skills	Subjects*	Examples
Curiosity	Science, Geography, TY, SPHE	Student-led inquiries, fieldwork, topic investigations.
Initiative	Business, TY, Life, Community and Work Specification (formerly LCVP)	Mini-company, personal project, leadership in group work.
Persistence / Grit	PE, Maths, Music	Working through challenges, practice over time, improving performance.
Adaptability	ICT, Group Work, Wellbeing	Coping with change in projects or digital tools, managing feedback.
Leadership	CSPE, TY, Prefect/Student Council roles	Leading campaigns, group presentations, mentorship.
Social & Cultural Awareness	History, Religion, MFL	Learning about diverse identities, values and global perspectives.

**subjects listed as an example but in no way limited to these areas.*

When all students feel seen, heard and represented in what they learn, they become more confident, motivated, and engaged. Inclusive WSG helps students build identity, agency and aspiration – no matter their background or ability.

Inclusion Is Essential in Whole-school Guidance

Whole-school guidance (WSG) is for every student.

Whether they are on a clear path or still exploring, students benefit from consistent, inclusive support throughout their time in school.

To achieve this, your school's WSG plan should reflect the continuum of support.

Guidance for All (Universal)

Provided through subjects, SPHE, Wellbeing, and informal interactions

Skills for learning and life (e.g. reflection, communication, self-management)

Career-related conversations and activities in class

Inclusive language, examples, and pathway visibility

Example: All students write a reflection on teamwork after a group project in History or Home Economics.

Guidance for Some (Targeted)

Provided through small group interventions,

TY supports, or career-focused projects

Subject-specific mentoring

TY and LCA work preparation and reflections

Targeted supports for students from underrepresented groups

Example: A group of students attends a workshop on apprenticeships or Further Education (FE) options based on interests.

Guidance for Few (Individualised)

Provided through one-to-one guidance sessions, SEN supports, and personal planning

Support with transitions, CAO/FET applications, or personal statements

Tailored advice based on personal, educational, or career needs

Example: A student meets with the Guidance Counsellor to support their application through the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) scheme.

Embedding Inclusion in Everyday Teaching

All staff can promote inclusion through Universal Design for Learning (UDL):

- Use accessible language and visuals in resources
- Offer content in multiple formats (text, video, discussion, visuals)
- Reflect diversity in examples, texts, and project choices
- Encourage multiple ways for students to show their learning

Check: In your subject...

Do students see diverse role models or voices?

Are all pathways visible (FET, apprenticeships, Tertiary Degrees, HE...)?

Are there options for reflection that work for different learners?

Who Should Be Involved in the Whole-School Guidance Planning Team?

Circular 0001/2025 highlights that WSG is: "the responsibility of the entire school community." Each school should form a team, called a whole-school guidance team to collaboratively design and develop a WSG plan.

A strong WSG planning team may include:

- **Guidance Counsellor(s)** – specialist knowledge in personal/social, educational and career development
- **Principal and Deputy Principal** – leadership and policy alignment
- **SPHE / Wellbeing / TY Coordinators** – connection to pastoral care and curriculum
- **Subject Teachers** – integration of 21st-century and career-related learning
- **SEN Coordinator** – inclusive access to pathways and planning for individual needs
- **HSCL / SCP / Chaplain** – strong student relationships and family engagement.

Every school is required to have a WSG plan that outlines how guidance is planned, led and delivered across subjects, wellbeing, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. The plan should be reviewed and updated annually, based on student and parent needs.

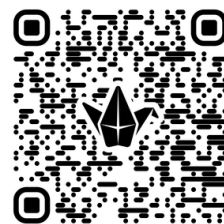
A strong WSG planning team combines a genuine interest in student development with the insight, collaboration, and initiative needed to shape guidance that reflects the unique needs of the school community.

Check out our **WSG Padlet** For additional information and supports on WSG, including recordings from our webinar series.

School support for guidance can be requested through your Principal which can include a visit to your school and/or sustained support.

Our **Oide Guidance website** has a growing repository of resources and supports.

Please follow us on X at **Oide_Guidance**.



Whole-school guidance is a living, evolving practice. It is made stronger by shared language, shared effort, and shared belief in the potential of every student.

We hope this issue has provided fresh insights, practical tools and renewed energy for supporting our students not just to succeed, but to thrive. A special word of thanks to Marie Cumiskey Professional Learning Leader for her work on developing this edition of the newsletter. Please let us know what you would like included in future newsletters! Using the QR code below, share your thoughts on topics for future newsletters from Oide Guidance.

Oide Guidance Team,
Joanne, Ginéad and Niamh

