



Oide

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Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí
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Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers

Leading Whole School Guidance Planning, Practice and Leadership

Professional Learning Experience for Senior School Leaders: Wednesday, 22nd April 2026

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Professional Learning Leaders in Guidance





Overview of PLE:

By the end of this session, participants will:

1. understand their **leadership** responsibility for guidance and **whole-school guidance (WSG)**
2. gain clarity on guidance **allocation** and **deployment**
3. Reflect on practical leadership **actions to strengthen guidance provision.**



<https://tinyurl.com/5eyzvf48>



Guidance Reflection

What guidance experience or support would have made a difference to you as a student?

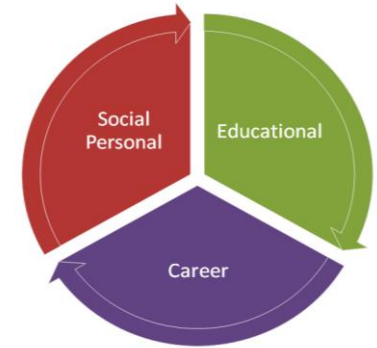


Reflection | Support | Experience |



What is Guidance?

*'Guidance is, by definition, **person-centred and holistic**. It supports an individual's personal and social, educational and career development: guidance **facilitates and empowers** individuals to make **informed decisions and life choices**. In post-primary schools, guidance plays a significant role in supporting students' **well-being** and contributes to building internal and external **resilience**.'*



DEY, Circular 01/2025, p.1



- Provides learning experiences in a developmental sequence
- Builds self-management skills
- Supports informed decision making

Holistic | Inclusive | Developmental | Empowering | Resilience

What is Whole-school Guidance?



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Contemporary model
Planned developmental programme
Whole-school shared responsibility
Delivered across a continuum of support

Guidance for All | For Some | For a Few

'WSG means that all school personnel (including but not limited to the guidance counsellors) have an important role and responsibility to support students with their personal, social, educational and career choices.'

DEY Circular 01/2025, p.1

Shared responsibility | Planned | Developmental | Continuum

Why Guidance Matters at Leadership Level:



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*‘A school shall use its available resources....to ensure that students have access to **appropriate guidance** to assist them in their educational and career choices...’*

DE Education Act, 1998, Sec 9(c)

*‘The Board of Management and school management team have a responsibility to ensure that the provision and practice of guidance in the school is of the **highest possible standard.**’*

DEY, Circular 1/2025, p.2



Access | Provision | Oversight

Specialist Role of the Guidance Counsellor



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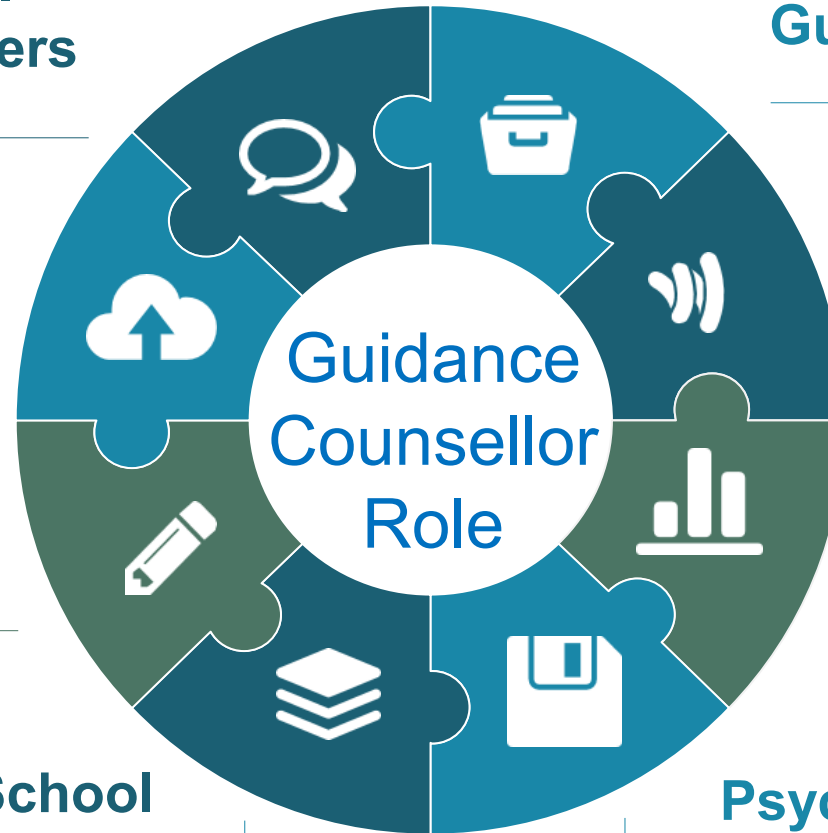
Links with FET, HEI
and External Partners

Guidance Learning

External
Referrals

Student
Support Team

Whole School
Guidance
Planning

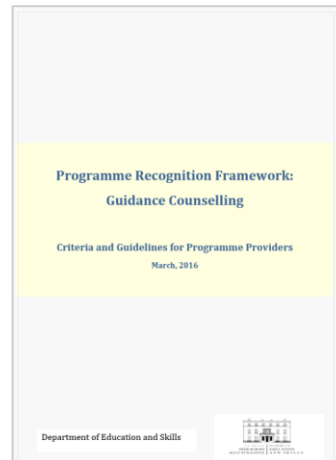


Individual /
Group Guidance
Counselling

Labour Market /
Career
Counselling

Psychometric
Testing

DE, Programme Recognition Framework, 2016.





Compliance and Allocation:

Qualified Guidance Counsellor

- Teaching Council Route 2 registration
- Recognised guidance counselling qualification

Guidance Allocation:

- Based on enrolment (Reduced PTR model)
- Leadership deploys across classroom, group and individual provision

School Category	Reduced PTR
Free Education Scheme – Non DEIS	18.4
Free Education Scheme – DEIS	17.65
Free Education Scheme – DEIS PLUS	17.36
Fee Charging	18.60

DEY Staffing Circulars 2026, Appendix 3

Non DEIS School (Free Education)

Enrolment 2024/25: **500**

500/19 PTR = 26.32 WTE
 500/18.4 PTR = 27.17 WTE
 27.17 - 26.32 = 0.86 x 22 = **18.88**

DEIS School (Free Education)

Enrolment 2024/25: **500**

500/19 PTR = 26.32 WTE
 500/17.65 PTR = 28.33 WTE
 28.33 - 26.32 = 2.01 x 22 = **44.28**

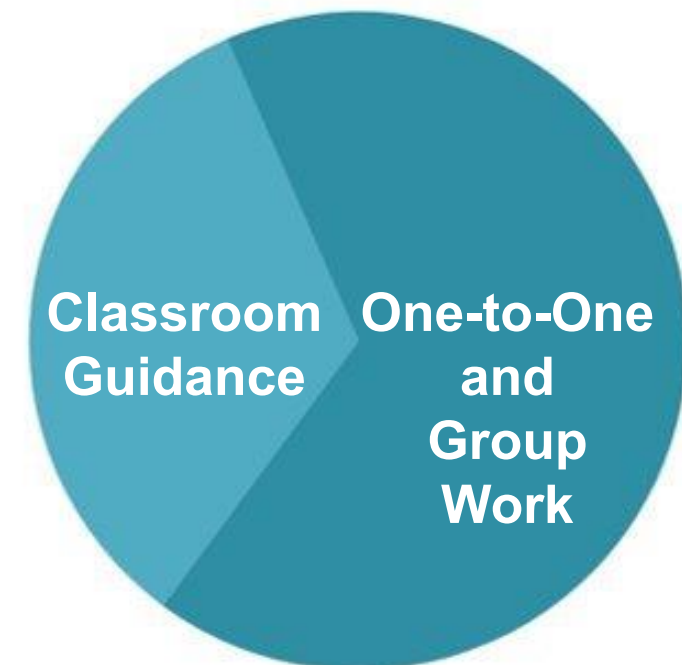


Time Balance



“It is recommended that one-third of guidance counsellor’s allocated time will be spent teaching classroom-guidance while two-thirds are made available for group work and one-to-one sessions”

DEY Circular 01/2025 p.2



‘The WSG-allocation should be utilised for whole-school-guidance related activities only.’

DEY Staffing Circular 2026, appendix 3

Where Guidance Happens in a School:



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Classroom
guidance

Group
guidance

Subject teaching

Student support
structures

One-to-one
guidance
counselling

Co-curricular
experiences

Transitions

School events



Culture | Collaborative | Consistent



The Whole-school Guidance Planning Team

*'Guidance is a whole school activity where each school **forms a team**, in which the guidance counsellor has a pivotal role, to collaboratively design and develop a whole-school guidance plan ...'*

DE, Staffing Circulars 2025, Appendix 3

Typically Includes:

- School leadership
- Guidance counsellor
- Key staff members/others



Responsibilities:

- **Designing and Developing** the whole-school guidance plan.
- **Monitoring** implementation
- Annual **review and updates**



Leadership | Planning | Evaluation

The Whole-school Guidance (WSG) Plan



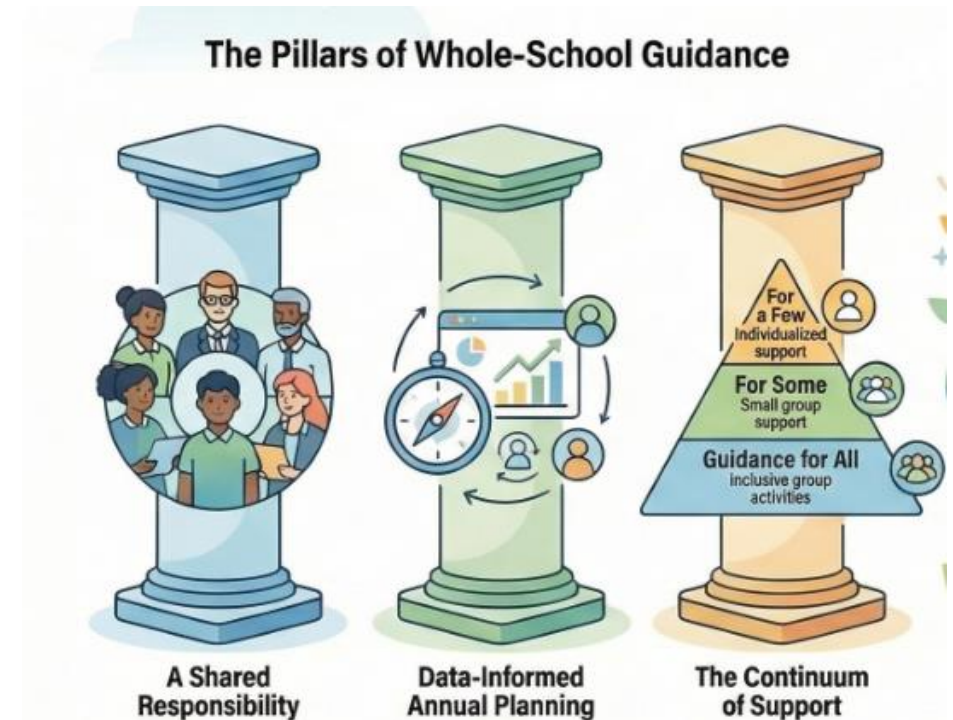
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A WSG Plan Should:

- Detail allocation and deployment
- Detail the WSG programme across year groups
- Be informed by identified student needs
- Student centred and inclusive of all, some and few
- Outline referral structures
- Be reviewed and updated annually

Leadership Role:

- Ensure coherence, balance and resourcing
- Oversee the WSG Team to monitor implementation and review impact
- Ensure subject department plans address guidance provision



A plan is only meaningful if it is implemented, monitored and reviewed.

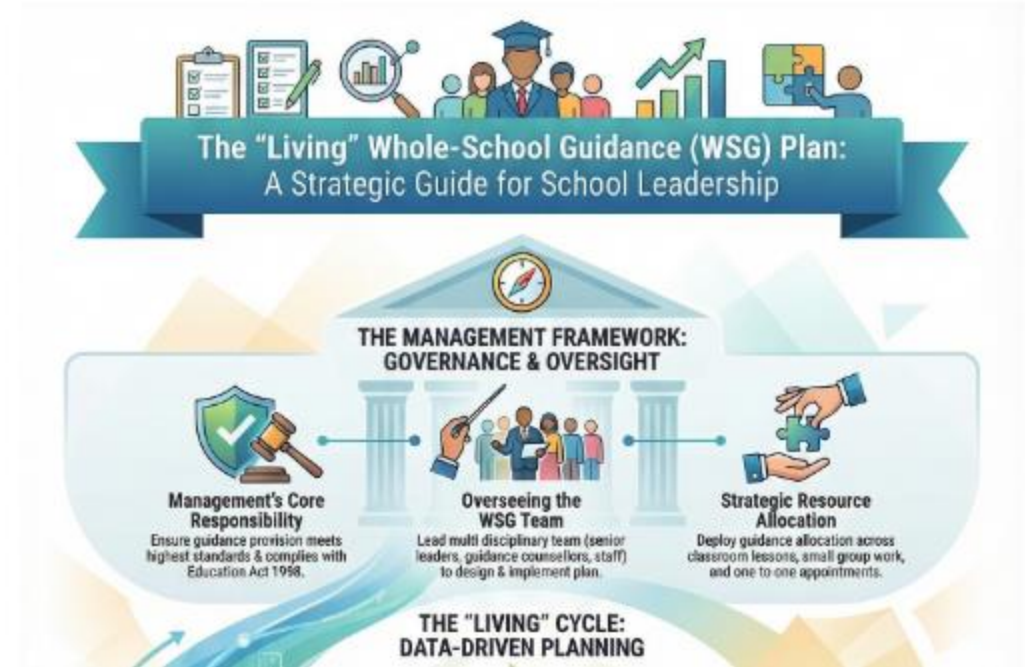
The Role of the Board of Management



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*'The Board of Management should **exercise oversight** by **reviewing and updating** the whole school guidance plan annually...the board should consider the plan and how it is **resourced** before it adopts the plan and makes it available to all staff, parents and pupils.'*

DE, Staffing Circulars 2026, Appendix 3



Oversight | Ratification | Visible

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Improvement Planning

Consultation to identify guidance needs, partners consulted (students, parents, staff, others)
 Current guidance areas for development – short-, medium- and long-term goals, SMART
 DEIS – how guidance is supporting targets
 Evaluation of Guidance – monitored, reviewed, evaluated and reported

World of Work

TY/LC/LCVP/LCA How W/E organised
 Procedures for W/E Reporting, diary, assessment
 Links with business, industry, internships
 Micro-credentials

Psychometric Testing

Psychometric assessment (Plans, Dates, Tests)
 Assessments / Year Groups (Links with AEN / EAL)
 Feedback / Sharing of Data / Storage / Psychometric Testing Training

Policies and Procedures

Policies – anti-bullying, confidentiality, critical incident, LGBTIQ+
 Guidance related procedures (subject choice / change of level)
 GDPR
 Confidentiality / access/ assisted decision making

DEY IN 1/2024



Organisation

Guidance Team
 Guidance Department
 Guidance Allocation
 Timetable of Guidance / 1:1/Small Group
 Guidance Supervision and CPD

Guidance Curriculum

Curricular Planning, Schemes of Work for Guidance Lessons
 Guidance Co-Curricular Planning
 ALL, Some, Few for JC, TY, SC
 Teaching, Learning, Assessment – SSE and DEIS

Student Support

Student Support Team
 Guidance Appts, Data Recording (templates)
 Supports for Parents, EAL Supports
 Links with internal (AEN, SPHE, Wellbeing) and external partners (Access)
 Guidance Communications – website, apps, twitter, school platform

Inclusion

How are students supported (AEN, ASD, Culturally sensitive Guidance, Children in Care, Refugee/Displaced, Traveller, Roma, EAL, ISL)
 Guidance related policies and procedures to support diversity and inclusion LGBTIQ+
 Diversity of career options / accessibility, DARE/HEAR/RACE
 Scholarships / Financial skills
 Transition Planning

Examples of WSG Activities from Subject Departments



Table 10: sample of WSG activities undertaken by the Maths Department

Activity	Link to WSG	Guidance for all/some/a few
STEM promotion	The Maths Department undertake numerous activities each year to promote STEM as a career. This involves a universal-design approach and utilisation of a variety of resources such as posters/ videos / computer applications / talks / external-tours etc. STEM promotion takes place throughout the entire academic year. Focus on careers in STEM. Focus on education pathways in STEM	All
Maths Week	Competition for all students: Students are asked to make a 60-second video showing "How maths is used in every job"	Open to all, typically engaged in by 'some'
Leaving Certificate re-checks / appeals	Maths teachers are available each August/September to support outgoing students who wish to discuss the grade they received / discuss their options in terms of appealing etc	Open to all, typically requested by a few
Link with student support team	Link with the student support team where appropriate	All
Maths Olympiad	Support students in engaging with the Irish Mathematical Olympiad and the European Girls Mathematical Olympiad. This promotes educational and career development in the area of mathematics.	A few

WSG planning and the Maths Department:

The Guidance Team link in with the Maths Department on two occasions each year (September and April) to update planning.
The Maths Department attend a presentation by the guidance counsellors to all staff on WSG at the beginning of each year.

Table 11: Sample of WSG activities undertaken by the German Department

Activity	Link to WSG	Guidance for all/some/a few
Link with student support team	Link with the student support team where appropriate	All students in school
Erasmus Exchange	Organise language exchange with school in Kloen each year	Some fifth-year students
School Open Night	Attend to showcase what learning German is like in our school and to connect with future parents and students, answer questions on the subject etc	All incoming first-year students
German Club	Supports students of all levels and ages who wish to come together to speak the language and engage in subject-related activities. Each year a trip to the Goethe Institute is organised by the students themselves. This promotes student-leadership, knowledge of the subject and career-decision making.	Open to all students who learn German, undertaken by a few.
MFL week	Focus on education and training Focus on careers using MFL	All/some
UCAS Applications	References written for students who wish to apply for courses in German (at the request of the student)	A few

Note: In all of the above-mentioned activities, the German Department links in with the guidance counsellor(s) as appropriate. This communication takes place formally (e.g. workshops during allocated staff-meetings / preparation meetings for official school events) and informally at times.

Examples of WSG Activities



Table 4: examples of WSG provision for second-year students

Activity	Provided by	Guidance for all/some/a few
<p>Classroom guidance in modules over a number of weeks (defined by each school). Classroom guidance may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Guidance-related learning' Unit 2 (with clear learning outcomes and an Appendix I) available through careers portal and scoilnet.ie Lesson time available to organise co-curricular classroom activities such as guest speakers to meet the needs of the year group (identified through student-survey) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance counsellors and/or; Member of Guidance Team, supported by guidance counsellors, or; member of teaching-staff, supported by the guidance counsellors 	All
<p>Parent and student evening: 'Goal-setting for my time in post-primary school'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance counsellors and/or; Member of guidance team, supported by guidance counsellors 	Open to all
<p>Careers week task for 2nd year students:</p> <p>Undertake a short interview with an adult who is working. "20 questions about your job"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed by class tutors, supported by the guidance counsellors 	All

Table 7: examples of WSG provision for fifth-year students

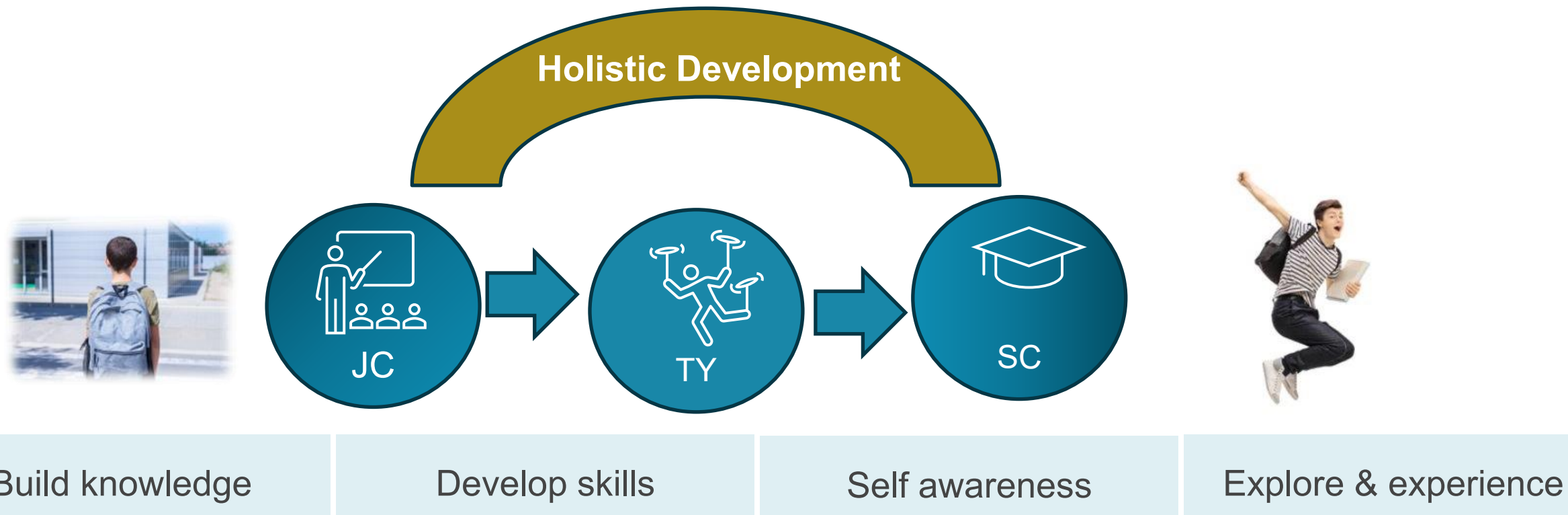
Activity	Provided by	Guidance for all/some/a few
<p>Classroom guidance in modules</p> <p>Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways and systems of application in Ireland; Pathways and systems of application in Europe; Pathways and systems of application in the US; Goal setting and; Project: Reflecting on where I am now and where I want to go. <p>Learning outcomes for this module are outlined in a later section of the guidance plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance Counsellor(s) and/or; Member of Guidance Team, supported by Guidance Counsellor(s), or; member of teaching-staff, supported by the Guidance Counsellor(s) 	All
<p>Study skills and academic goal setting</p>	All teachers in first week of October and first week of March	All
<p>Academic mentoring and monitoring</p>	Teachers who volunteer Organised by guidance team	Open to all, undertaken by some
<p>Mock interviews with those students who wish to take part (all encouraged)</p>	Year head and other teachers in association with Parents Council	Some
<p>Preparation for and Reflections on Work experience for LCVP students</p>	Work experience coordinator and LCVP coordinator	Some
<p>Guidance meetings for those intending on applying for options abroad particularly those with additional application elements to follow up on general content flagged in guidance modules</p>	Guidance counsellors	Few



DEY IN 1/2024 Appendix 1 p9 - 16.



Structuring Guidance Across the Continuum

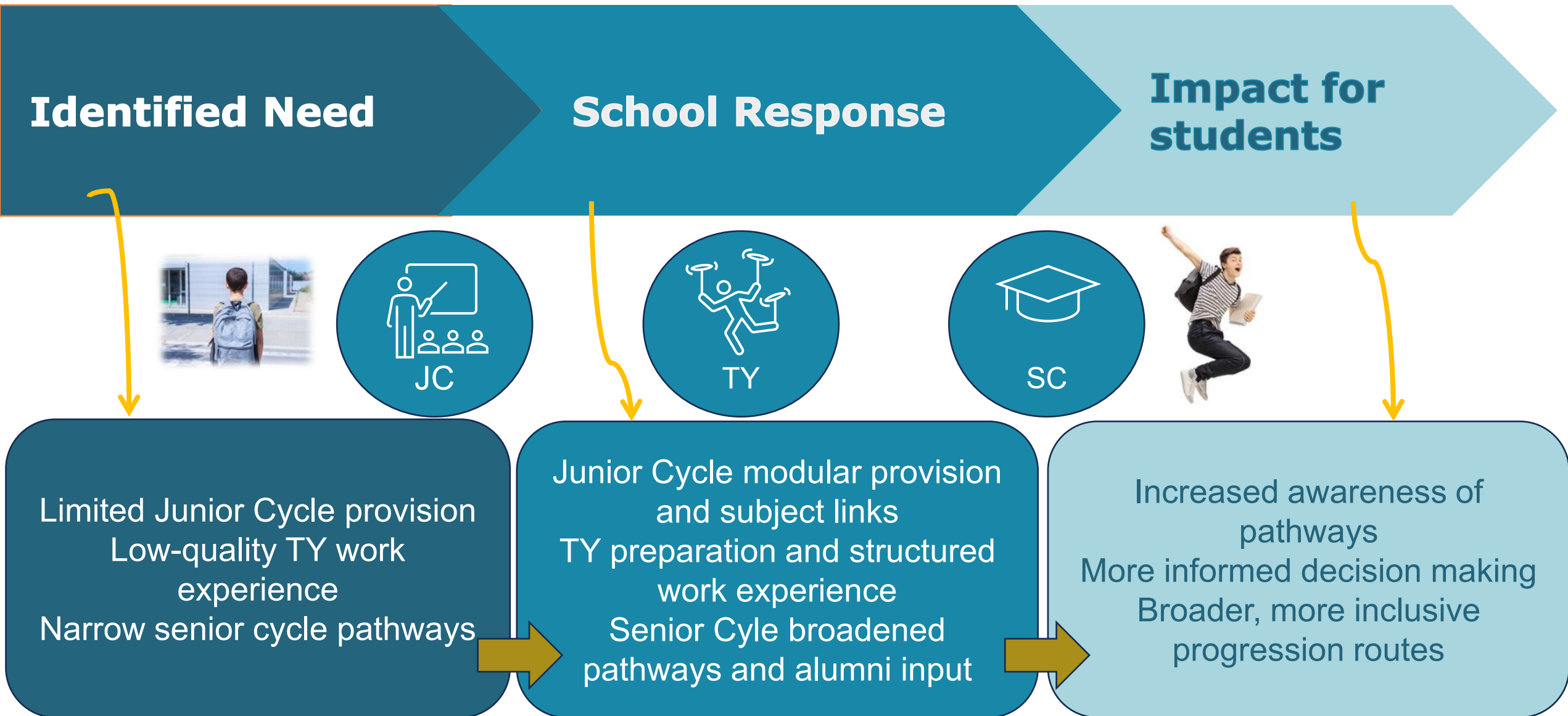


Planned, needs-led and balanced guidance provision across year groups

Responding to Guidance Needs Across the Continuum



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WSG: Collaboration and Alignment:



Collaboration
with other
teams.

Building internal
and external
connections

A shared
responsibility and
understanding of
WSG

Time allocation
and resources

Whole School Planning

A Journey, not a Destination



In a whole school approach, all members of the school community (school leaders, middle management, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and communities) play an active role, and understand their shared responsibility.



Whole-school Guidance Planning

Identifying your Next Steps

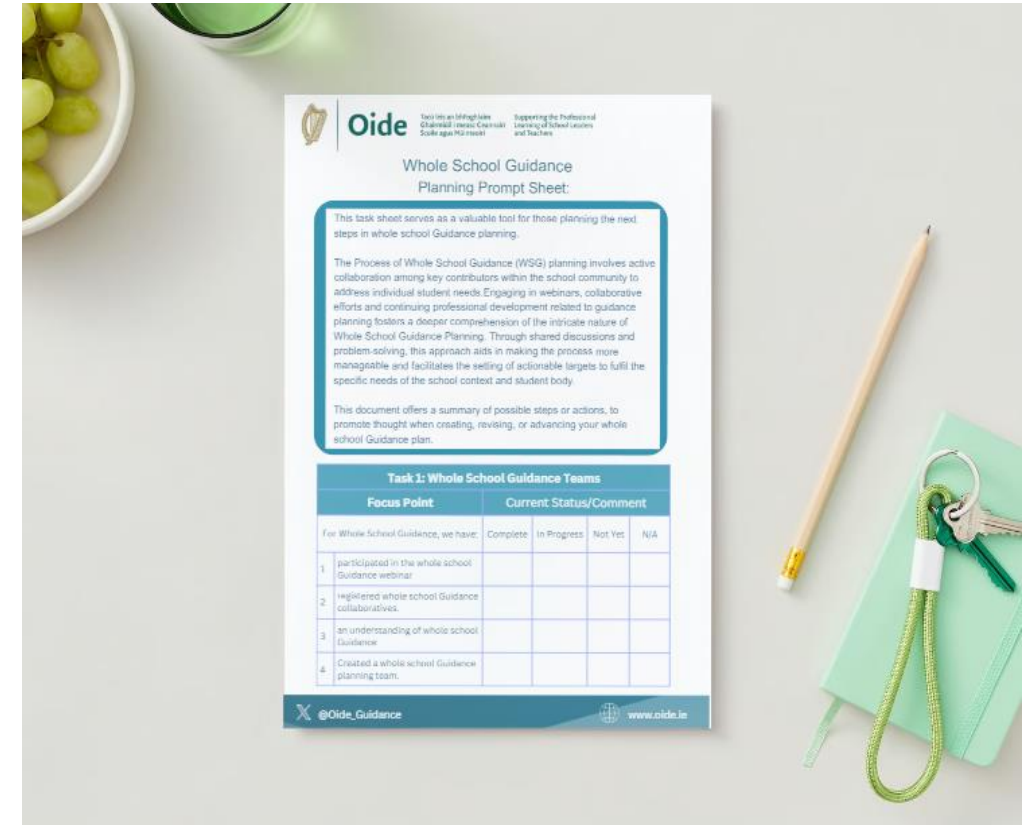


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The prompt sheet can be utilised here focus your thoughts, progress and actions.



<https://tinyurl.com/5eyzvf48>



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Timetabling Guidance Across the Continuum



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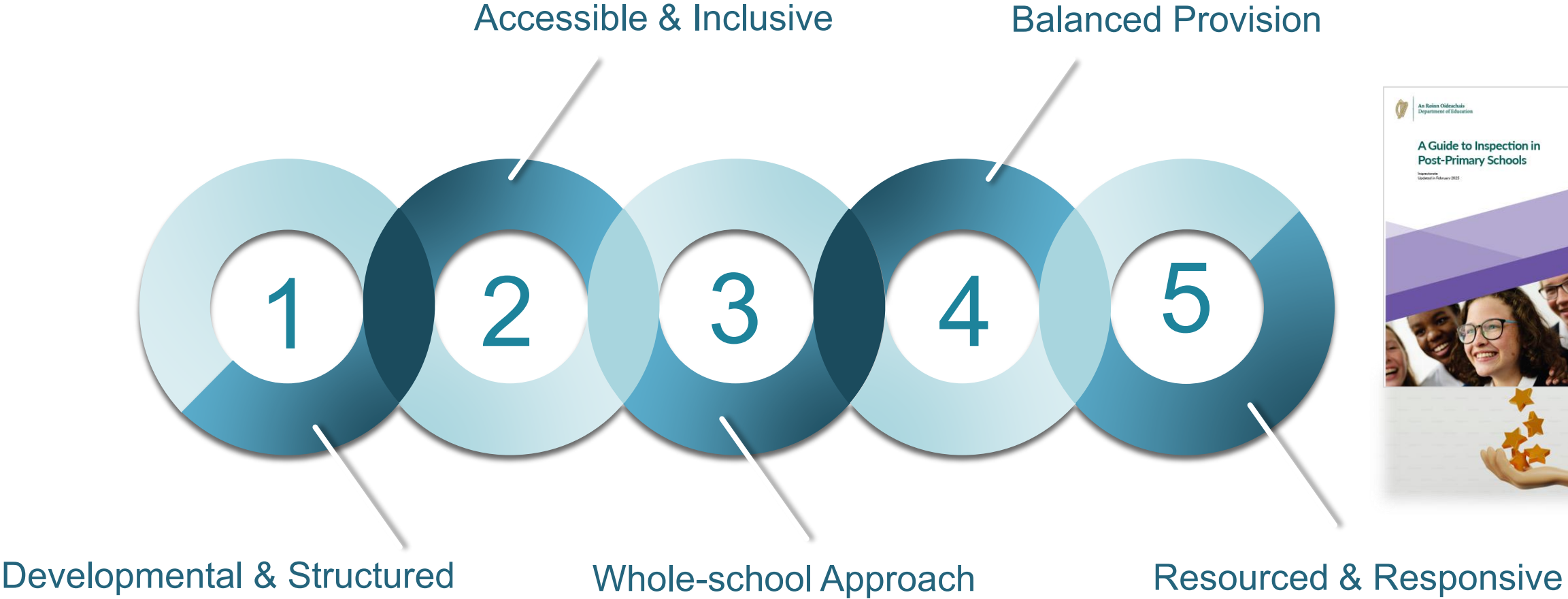
Junior Cycle	Senior Cycle
Classroom Guidance must be provided. This can be within wellbeing [part of 65 hours] or outside of this. [DEY Circular 28/2023]	Classroom developmental programme along the continuum of learning for all students and in response to needs of students. [school autonomy]
No maximum or minimum hours [DEY IN 09/2023]. Does not have to be delivered by Guidance Counsellor.	TY Programme Statement 2024: The component of ‘Career Guidance’ can be delivered through one class a week or classes timed to target career related learning or events during the year (p19)
No curriculum specification. Typically, modular units of learning recommended	No curriculum specification apart from LCA VPG. Recommended that the Guidance module is delivered by a guidance counsellor.
Protected time for individual support.	Modular units of learning
Important that units of learning are not duplicated but rather compliment other curriculum specifications. [NCCA Wellbeing guidelines 2021]	Protected time for individual and group support.



What Good Practice in WSG Looks like



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Effective WSG is planned, inclusive, and experienced by every student across their school journey



Key Leadership Actions

- Ensure **compliance** and appropriate **deployment**.
- Lead and **review** of the WSG plan annually.
- Protect **balance**: classroom, group and individual provision.
- Promote **shared responsibility** of WSG among all staff and **participation** in WSG team.

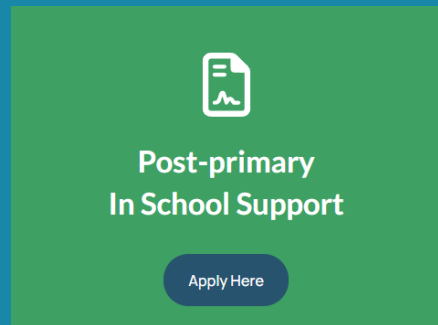


If students were asked about WSG in your school, what would they say?

Leadership of guidance is leadership of student futures.



Further Supports



Follow us on X: @Oide_Guidance



Email: guidance@oide.ie



References

Staffing Circulars 0026 - 0028/2026 (Appendix 3)

0001/2025: Guidance in Post Primary Schools

0001/2024 Whole-School Guidance (IN)

0009/2023 WSG Provision at Junior Cycle (IN)

0008/2023 Personal and Social Guidance Counselling

*0028/2023: Arrangements for the Implementation of
the Framework for JC*

DEY Guidance in Schools Website



<https://tinyurl.com/3vbt94bh>



Thank You

*Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so
much.*

– Helen Keller



<https://tinyurl.com/5eyzvf48>



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