

Meánscoil na mBráithre Críostaí, Cill Chainnigh
Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.



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WHOLE SCHOOL STUDENT SUPPORT & GUIDANCE POLICY
June 2016

School Name:	Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
School Address:	James's Street, Kilkenny
School Details:	CBS Kilkenny is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.
School Management:	The Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement

Inspired by its founder, CBS Kilkenny aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Kilkenny seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

The Student Support Plan is a structured document that describes the school student support and guidance programme and specifies how the guidance needs of the students are addressed. The support plan has been drawn up in consultation with all of the school partners in order to ensure that it reflects the identified needs of our students. It is an integral part of this school's overall plan which has been developed and implemented as a collaborative effort by the Guidance Counsellor, teachers, school management, Board of management, Programme teams, students and parents.

Key elements of the Student Support Plan are:

- AIMS – What the school aims to provide through its Support Plan
- TARGET GROUPS – Which students benefit from this provision?
- OBJECTIVES – What support and guidance outcomes are intended?
- ACTIVITIES – How these outcomes are achieved?
- RESOURCES – Resources which are available to support these outcomes.
- REVIEW – Monitoring how these objectives are achieved.

AIMS

CBS Kilkenny provides a range of learning experiences in a developmental sequence designed to assist our students to make choices in their lives in Personal and Social, Educational and Career areas.

TARGET GROUPS

The Student Support Programme takes into account the needs of all students at all levels within the school. Resources are used in accordance with the school Mission Statement, particular needs identified within the school and the local social and economic environment in which we operate.

OBJECTIVES

CBS. sets out to identify the specific needs of each year group. Small support groups e.g. Learning Support, facilitate students with special educational needs and students from disadvantaged or minority groups.

ACTIVITIES

A broad range of support/guidance activities has been incorporated as a means to realize these objectives and assist students in making choices and transitions. These activities are facilitated by teaching staff, class tutors, middle management year heads and programme coordinators, senior management, guidance counsellor, chaplain, religious and pastoral care teams, student council, parents' council and Cairdeas mentoring teams. Student support is approached through *educational, career and also personal and social guidance.*

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT:

- Subject planning groups meet regularly to co-ordinate policy and practice for each year group
- Regular and term assessment allows feedback on learning and enhances student development. Mixed ability at junior level allows for common tests showing written, visual, oral and aural achievements.
- Mandatory curricular practical projects and science experiments enhance the continuous learning of students in a sequential manner.
- Subject choice and planning for Junior and Senior cycle are addressed at student and parent consultation meetings with necessary information afforded on each subject area. A systematic presentation allows for diverse student interests and abilities.
- A mixed ability approach is offered in 1st. Year. Higher and ordinary levels are generally catered for in the same class group but differentiation and some separate classes are provided where it is deemed necessary and possible.
- Learning Support classes are provided on a one to one basis or in small groups for students who will benefit from extra support. These may be students with language/Irish exemptions, those with specific educational requirements or those from minority or disadvantaged groups. Smaller groups allow students to address their educational weaknesses. Students thereby gain support and independence in their subject areas.
- Educationally disadvantaged students are supported and encouraged to complete second-level and proceed to third-level education / training programmes.
- A Tutor system offers positive reinforcement of students allowing recognition and communication with parents on students' educational and developmental progress. It sets common standards of acceptable behaviour.
- The Year Head system provides support to students and teachers and links to senior management.
- Participation in maths and science quizzes, the Young Scientist exhibition, Francis MacManus short story competition, debating, public speaking and Study Skills programme allows students to develop extra-curricular and possibly career interests in subjects.
- Parent-Teacher meetings offer communication between teachers and parents to encourage student learning. Students can thereby understand and improve on their abilities, gaining self-confidence.
- The guidance counsellor facilitates the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to studying, exam performance, and choice of subjects, levels and careers. Psychometric tests are administered and interpreted with feedback of results to relevant staff, parents and students where appropriate. Timetabled, senior cycle, classroom based learning clarifies and prepares students for vocational and technological requirements in future careers. Information and communication technologies (ICT), skills development such as planning, decision- making, study skills, communication and values are prepared. Consultation with parents, school staff and students gives feedback on the needs of individual students. Referrals are made to outside agencies – NEPS, Dept. of Ed, SENO AND HSE as necessary.

- The TY programme is based on developing the maturity of the students. Subject choice modules clarify and direct students towards senior cycle options. Self-directed learning, team building exercises, work experience, volunteerism and visits to local companies vary and enhance the educational experience of these students.
- The LCVP programme co-ordinated by the guidance counsellor, offers a vocational and enterprising perspective to students while pursuing the Leaving Cert. Programme.
- Students are afforded opportunities such as, building an individual portfolio, undertaking video interviews, enterprise projects and visiting businesses in the community.
- The Parents' Council assumes responsibility for organising and operating a Study
- Skills seminar each year.

CAREER SUPPORT IS AS FOLLOWS:

- Guidance activities such as professional visits, visiting speakers, 3rd level open day visits.
- Factual data from the guidance counsellor on education and training opportunities, including foreign colleges, occupation labour market information, entitlements available to students provide an invaluable basis for career choices.
- Links have been established with employers, relevant agencies and institutions to enhance the guidance counsellor's work with students.
- Work experience during TY in two, two-weekly periods promotes opportunity and practical experience of the workplace.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

The CBS. aims to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills relating to the students' personal and social development, self-awareness, decision making and planning. This is carried out by all members of the school community.

- The Tutor and Year Head systems allow for the positive motivation of individual students, especially those with learning difficulties.
- Learning support is undertaken in a small, friendly environment, boosting individual confidence. A great sense of achievement is promoted in small stages.
- Sport, timetabled and voluntary, is significant in its acknowledgement of all students and of all academic abilities.
- The SPHE programme addresses many areas of personal and psychological issues in a non-exam setting. Mental Health week creates discussion and activity around self-care and awareness of others.

- Religious Education, examined at Junior Cert and optional at Leaving Cert explores areas of morality and personal development. The caring ethos of Edmund Rice is nurtured continually throughout the year at school Masses and services. Regular visits by the school chaplain presents a familiar and caring refuge to all.
- Open Night for incoming 1st. Years provides an opportunity for young boys and their parents to be brought through the educational, personal and social and career aspects of life in CBS.
- Many optional activities expose students to a great sense of well-being within the school environment. School trips, national and international, along with visiting speakers are an excellent method of informing student attitudes on world issues.
- I.T. club, debating, public speaking, short story competitions, chess club, Seachtain na Gaeilge and the Concern fast open students' minds to their many and varied capabilities for self -development.
- The Guidance Counsellor directs the Cairdeas Group, selected annually, which acts as a mentoring service to 1st. year students. Various activities foster friendship and a sense of belonging.
- The Annual Awards night acknowledges and rewards the diversity of excellence among the student body on academic, sporting and also personal and social levels. Parents witness this positive recognition of their sons.
- The services of a Counsellor are available to the school on a weekly basis. Teachers and management may recommend individual students for counselling if there are perceived needs.
- A critical incident team is available to deal with difficult circumstances surrounding bereavement.
- Personal and social support is enhanced by teacher participation in presentations by guest speakers on topics such as 'positive psychology', 'well-being' and 'moodwatchers'. Many staff engage in CPD to promote personal and social support for the students.

RESOURCES

Resources describe the personnel, time allocation, equipment, materials, physical locations and finance required for the performance of student support activities and management of the school support programme.

CBS Kilkenny school and community resources:

- Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principal
- Guidance Counsellor
- School counsellor
- Subject and Learning Support Teachers
- Class Tutors, Year Heads, TY and LCVP coordinators
- Support Teams – Bereavement and Pastoral Care
- Parents
- Students
- School budget finances guidance supports
- Guidance suite – office and theatre
- Classrooms assigned to individual teachers
- Computer rooms, data-projectors, TV / DVD, video materials
- Science, technology, technical drawing and woodwork laboratories
- Library
- Second-hand book scheme
- School website
- Community work placement
- Dept. of Education and Science agencies

ASSOCIATED SCHOOL POLICIES

- Attendance
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Subject Choice
- Substance abuse
- Dignity in the workplace
- Homework
- Literacy and numeracy
- Healthy eating
- IT

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Student Support and Guidance Plan makes provision for ongoing monitoring, on an annual basis and review, every three years. We assess the extent to which student needs are being achieved, factors that facilitate or hinder that achievement and investigate possible newly emerging target groups. This is undertaken by soliciting the views of all school partners. The Board of Management ensures that the provision and practice of student support is of the highest standard. The Guidance Counsellor collaborates with school management in reviewing the support and guidance plan. Subject teachers provide advice in their areas and through various roles within the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The school partners have suggested the following recommendations:

- Subject structure/ choice may be revisited in terms of the changing nature of student needs
- Communications with parents may be shared with teachers in all relevant cases
- Student consultation meetings, as piloted at 6th. Year level, offer scope and potential. Scheduling of whole staff participation in such consultations needs attention.
- Possibility of Prefect System associated with Students' Council
- Learning Support is a huge positive influence. Timetabling may be addressed to maximise improvements. Continuity of teachers is essential.
- Provision of time for LCVP needs to be improved
- Timetabling of male teachers in the area of SPHE would be beneficial in health education and as role models.
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The review committee agreed that good provision has and continues to be made so as to provide for the guidance needs of all the students in this school

The committee reviewing this programme amended the following areas - Educational Support, Personal and Social Support and Resources – see underlined sections.

The recommendation to ensure the continuity of interested teachers in the area of Learning Support was further, strongly emphasised.

Approval

This policy has been approved by CBS Kilkenny Board of Management.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management