

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this hand-book, is to describe what students/pupils and their parents can expect from the Guidance service at this point in time.

It is also intended, to serve as a model for future work practices of all those involved in this area.

It can help Guidance Teachers and schools evaluate the service they are offering, and to decide on priorities for change and development.

This compilation has involved a great deal of hard work by many people. The group who drafted it, would like to thank all those who contributed through verbal comments, and written suggestions at the consultation stage.

This document reflects the wide-ranging and complex nature of guidance. It will not only inform on the work of Guidance Teachers, but it should help other teachers realize that, they too have an important role to play, in guidance.

Guidance assists all young people to get most out of school. All tasks described are important, and deserve support without interruption to the learning and teaching process. This means that time and resources are crucial, if guidance is to be effective.

The Education Division has a highly committed and hard working team of Guidance Teachers and Counsellors who deserve support, and a generation of young people who, should be given all the help they need to achieve their full potential.

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SECTION 1

BACKGROUND AND PRINCIPLES

A BRIEF HISTORY

Guidance and Counselling Services were set up within the Department of Education in September 1968, when the recommendations made by Professor J.L.Louis, a consultant sent over to Malta by UNESCO, were taken up. In 1974 the posts of Education Officer, Counsellor and Guidance Teacher were introduced and so Guidance and Counselling was formalized in our education organisational structure. In 1984 Guidance and Counselling Services established themselves in their new premises at 1, St Publius Street, Floriana.

THE DEVELOPMENT

- The Agreement concluded in 1974 between the Government and the Malta Union of Teachers, established the post of Guidance Teacher and Counsellor in the Secondary/Post-Secondary Sectors and the post of Education Officer (Guidance and Counselling).
- The Reorganization Agreement drawn up between the Government and the MUT in 1994, referring to the Classification, Regrading and Assimilation of the Education Class specifies that one Guidance Teacher is to be assigned to every 300 students.
- Guidance Teachers have the opportunity to follow a Diploma level course of studies at the University of Malta.
- The filling of vacancies in the grade of School Counsellor is by selection following a call for application open to teachers who are in possession of a recognized qualification in counselling, and who satisfy the conditions stated hereunder.

Secondary Sector:

- ◆ have not less than 10 years teaching experience of which at least 5 years must be in State Schools, and
- ◆ have served for at least 5 years as Guidance Teachers in State Schools.

Primary Sector:

- ◆ **have taught for at least 10 years** in Primary State Schools.

When the Reorganization Agreements established the Post of School Counsellor for the Primary and Trade schools, they extended the service to the full range of students.

- ◆ **The 1994 agreement established the post of School Counsellor in the Primary Sector for teaching grades,**
- ◆ **The 1996 agreement established the post of School Counsellor for instructor grades in the Trade Sector.**

These agreements envisage:

- ◆ **1 Education Officer (Guidance & Counselling)**
- ◆ **15 Counsellors for Secondary and Post-secondary Schools**
- ◆ **5 Counsellors for Primary Schools.**
- ◆ **2 Counsellors for Trade Schools.**
- ◆ **1 Guidance Teacher every 300 pupils.**

Guidance Teachers have a maximum teaching load of 14 lessons of 45 minutes duration (including replacements). In cases where the multiple of a specific subject exceeds 14 lessons in the particular subject, up to two additional lessons may be assigned.

WHAT IS GUIDANCE?

Guidance is an integral and central part of education. Effective guidance is conducive to more effective learning and higher educational attainment, and it furthers the personal development of pupils.

Guidance programmes are concerned with furthering all aspects of the personal development of pupils (including intellectual, social and vocational development). In this document, Guidance is visualized as a continuous process which is developed and maintained throughout the school years. Therefore, the principles of Guidance as presented in this document are relevant to all educational sectors.

The aims, objectives, programmes and policies for guidance in a school are developed in the context of the school's overall educational policy and should be consistent with national policies and recommendations.

Guidance programmes should be responsive to changes in education, the community and society in general.

All members of staff in the school make important contributions to guidance programmes. In recognition of this, it is desirable that all members of staff actively promote the personal development of pupils.

Guidance programmes are person-centred and are, therefore, primarily concerned with empowering pupils to take responsibility for themselves, their own development and learning rather than imposing particular standpoints, values and decisions.

Guidance programmes are concerned with the identification of different needs and the implementation of strategies to meet these needs.

These needs include:

- The developmental needs which all pupils have in common as they progress through childhood into adolescence and towards adulthood.
- The specific personal, educational and vocational needs of individual pupils.
- Other needs arising as a result of the demands placed on pupils by the education system and society.

Guidance programmes aim to cater for and to strike a balance between these types of needs.

Guidance programmes are based on the development of positive, caring and supportive relationships between and among pupils and staff. These relationships are characterized by:

- Respect and positive regard for all persons as individuals of value.
- An emphasis on the recognition and development of positive qualities and achievements.
- Openness, honesty and genuineness. This includes openness with pupils about access others may have to the information they divulge.
- Involvement of pupils in decision-making and negotiation about their own personal development and education, and a recognition that all pupils have the right to make their own decisions within the boundaries necessary for the effective functioning of the school.
- Continuity of care, that is pupils should have the opportunity to maintain and develop relationships with a particular person / persons who retain/s a guidance responsibility for them as they progress through the school from one year to the next.

These programmes should be structured to include experiences designed to help pupils develop understanding, qualities and skills essential to personal development and educational achievement. These include particularly the development of:

- self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence,
- the ability to assess personal strengths and weaknesses and to develop strategies for using strengths and dealing with weaknesses,
- the qualities and skills necessary to form effective relationships with others,
- decision-making skills and strategies, including vocational and career planning,
- the ability to deal with change, and with life transitions,
- personal responsibility and self-determination,
- personal and social skills which help the individual function as a competent and happy member of society;- this means helping pupils to function effectively both in the present as a young person, and in the future as an adult.

Guidance programmes enable the development of positive links with parents according to the needs of pupils.

They also enable the development of links, openness and cooperative working practices with other people and agencies, according to the needs of the pupils.

All pupils have an equal right of access to guidance programmes regardless of their age, sex, ability, race and beliefs.

Guidance work requires high levels of skill from staff. All involved should have an appropriate level of training, support and access to further professional development.

Guidance policies and programmes within schools should contain a structure for evaluation and development of guidance.

WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Counselling:

- is based on the recognition of the dignity and worth of the individual and on the right to personal assistance in time of need.
- is client-centred, being concerned with the optimum development of the whole person and the fullest realization of his/her potential.
- is a continuous, sequential and educational process.
- has a responsibility to the individual as well as to society.
- must respect the right of every person to accept or refuse the help and services it offers.
- is orientated towards cooperation not **compulsion or coercion**.
- implies assistance given to person in making wise choices, plans, interpretations, and adjustments in the critical situations of life.
- demands a comprehensive study of the individual in his/her cultural setting.
- Individual understanding must precede individual assistance.
- focuses on helping the individual realize and actualize him/herself.
- provides conditions which facilitate voluntary changes.

In Counselling:

Information may be given, but counselling is much more than that.

Advice, should be recognised as such, and not camouflaged as counselling, suggestions and recommendations have to be averted.

No matter how indirectly, subtly or painlessly done, the influencing of attitudes, beliefs or behaviour, by means of persuading, leading or convincing, has no place in counselling. The same can be said for admonishing, warnings threats or compelling.

Interviewing is not part of counselling. Selecting or assigning individuals for various careers or activities cannot form part of counselling.

GUIDANCE AS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS

Caring is an important component of the educational process for pupils. In the primary school the class teacher has contact with his/her pupils for most of the day, and is in a good position to have detailed awareness of the stage of development of the individual pupil, and a good understanding of his/her needs and concerns.

Primary Schools and Post-Secondary Schools will readily appreciate the applicability of the principles of guidance in this document. They will probably find that large sections of this document have equal significance for them. Of course, some adjustments will need to be made for example, the tasks and transitions described will naturally focus largely on different stages of developments.

There are, however, some important differences between guidance in secondary schools and guidance in further education. These differences create a diversity of needs and these, in turn, create the necessity for different tasks and structures to cater for the needs of these students.

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE

Developmental Guidance is based on:

- **identifying and meeting the personal and social needs of pupils.**
- **helping them to deal successfully with their concerns.**

Recent developments show that guidance and curricular work are not separate entities. They complement each other to provide for the all round development of all pupils. A carefully structured guidance programme can effectively identify and meet the full range of pupil needs.

Each school, therefore, should identify and review the specific needs of its pupils and base its guidance programme on these needs.

It is important too, that these needs are reviewed periodically, involving all stakeholders in the process, that is teachers, administrators, parents and students themselves.

Although the school counsellor and the Guidance teachers are at the core of the programme, their work can be much more effective if it is integrated with that of the staff of the school, the parents, the community and other support agencies.

Guidance succeeds best through effective teamwork and cooperation to achieve the highest standards of personal and educational achievements.

Therefore, Guidance is a structured *whole school* programme, based on the identified needs of pupils, which are basic to the achievement of the broad aims of education.

SECTION 2

MEETING NEEDS

STUDENT NEEDS

It is advisable that Guidance Teachers be fully aware, of all types of student needs so that they will be able to plan a guidance programme, which meets these needs.

Developmental needs

These are underlying areas of need and skill development relevant to all stages of each pupil's growth. A continuous development of these areas throughout life is necessary. The following areas provide a firm basis of attitudes, skills and emotional maturity for dealing successfully with other areas of need:

- Self-esteem, confidence and support
- Self-awareness, self-assessment and self-development
- Personal relationships and communication
- Creating and using opportunities
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Values clarification

Transition needs

Transition needs are areas of need, which occur at specific, fairly well-defined times of change, including both those which occur naturally and those which are imposed, for example, by the education system itself.

- Transition from Primary to Secondary School.
- Subject option Year 6
- Subject option Form II (Junior Lyceums)
- Subject choices Form III (Secondary Schools)
- Technology choices III
- Transition from school to further education/employment.

Personal "Crisis" points

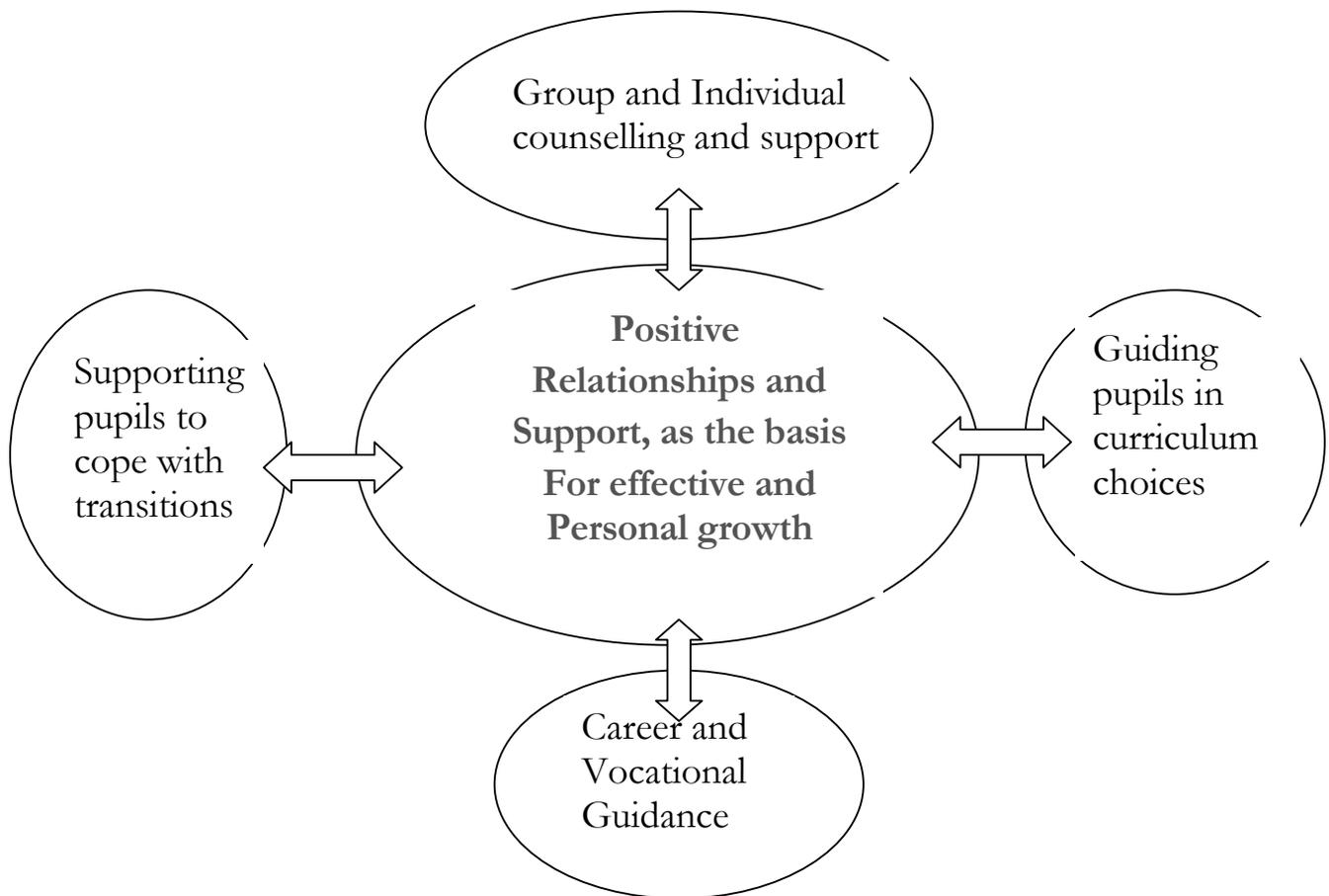
Personal "Crisis" Points are particular/specific needs, which generally occur with little warning or time for preparation. These are needs which most pupils will experience at a time which is generally not predictable but which, however, need to be dealt with. These include:

- dealing with stress (eg. emotional stress within relationships, exam-related stress),
- dealing with loss (including bereavement),
- moving/leaving home,
- child abuse,
- bullying,
- dealing with illness, accident and injury,
- refugee problem.

It is this identification and review of needs, which should form the basis of a school's guidance programme.

ELEMENTS OF A GUIDANCE PROGRAMME

- An effective guidance programme focuses, on the fostering of positive relationships to obtain maximum educational performance and that it is through these relationships that support is provided to pupils according to their personal needs.
- It follows, therefore, that the focus should be on guidance as a normal activity for all pupils, although offering help to pupils who have particular difficulties or are trying to deal with personal crises is still a *guidance responsibility*.
- The major elements of an effective, comprehensive Guidance programme are shown below:



INDIVIDUAL GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING

One way in which guidance meets the needs of students, is through offering help and support on a one-to-one basis.

This is most appropriate when the student has:

- a specific need
- a problem or difficulty of a personal or confidential nature.

Each student has the right to seek help and support from his/her guidance teacher or school counsellor.

Guidance Teachers should be easily accessible to students for such help, and should make this well known to all pupils under their care.

The student's individual need may be of a personal, educational/curricular and vocational nature.

Guidance sessions can be held either, on individual or group basis, depending on the nature of the issue/s involved.

It is most important that the Guidance Teachers:

- promote their availability to students and parents, and make known procedures for accessing of services,
- meet all new students as soon as possible, after entry, in order to monitor how well they are settling in, and to discover if there is any particular or general need to be addressed,
- review the students' progress and help them set targets for the future,
- provide all the necessary information and support before, during and after important transitions, so as to make the change as smooth as possible.

Counselling Practice

- It is to be remembered that counselling requires a high level of expertise, and is **undertaken only by professionally competent people**.
- Guidance Teachers are encouraged to avail themselves of all opportunities for further specialization in guidance and counselling.
- Guidance teachers are to be aware of any limitations they might have in counselling and refer to, and consult with, the school counsellor.
- The counsellor is always available to help and support guidance teachers and any other members of the staff, whenever a pupil has chosen to put his/her trust in them.

Consultancy role

As well as being available and accessible to pupils, counsellors are at hand to offer help to staff and parents on matters relating to the personal, social and educational development of pupils.

Procedures

If individual guidance and counselling are to be carried out effectively, each school needs to have:

- allocation of guidance lessons on the timetable, evenly distributed throughout the week,
- appropriate guidance rooms, where counselling and/or guidance interviews may take place. The rooms need to be accessible to all pupils at appropriate times.

Self-referrals

Guidance Teachers should clearly define and make known to pupils, staff and parents:

- how and when pupils can request appointment with the guidance teacher or school counsellor,
- details of how the guidance teacher/school counsellor may be contacted, together with the times when they are available. These should be prominently displayed and/or printed in newsletters or school diaries distributed to pupils and parents,
- how, when, and for what reasons staff should, and may refer pupils to the guidance teacher or school counsellor.

Confidentiality

Every individual seeking help has a right for *confidentiality*.

Therefore, guidance teachers and school counsellors, will observe confidentiality. Confidentiality may, however, be broken whenever the personal safety of individual or others is at risk. Thus, guidance teachers and counsellors, should inform pupils accordingly, before the commencement of the counselling session.

Personal information, volunteered by any individual, should be regarded as the property of that person. Unless otherwise agreed with parents, or pupil, personal information held by Guidance Staff will be treated confidentially, as this term is normally understood professionally.

Such information will be used only, among professionals, who have a responsibility for the pupil, when it has a bearing on the effectiveness of the education or personal development of that pupil.

When personal information is requested from pupils or parents, the specific purposes of the request, should be made known to them.

*In situations where the physical or emotional health of the pupils are judged to be at **risk**, the school will use information in ways which it deems as necessary to counteract that risk. So the use of confidential information, in this way, should be at the discretion of the Head of School, his or her delegate and Guidance Staff.*

When confidential services such as counselling are offered to pupils or parents, the terms of this confidentiality, should be made known to all those who might use these services

CO-OPERATION WITH SUPPORT AGENCIES

- To meet the needs of all students effectively, the Guidance and Counselling Services, need not only refer students to other support agencies but, they should also be involved in case conferences. This will facilitate co-ordinations of interventions for better effectiveness.
- **The Support Agencies within Student Services of the Education Division are:**

The Education Welfare Service	21220838, 21225943, 21243523
School Psychological Services	21242882
Education Medical Services	21248819
Unit Ghozza	21243869
Special Education	21231567, 21233698
Special Learning Difficulties Service	21234965

- **Other external agencies include:**

The Child Development Assessment Unit (C.D.A.U.) at St. Luke's Hospital.	25951792
The Child Guidance Clinic at St. Luke's Hospital.	25951791
Sedqa, Braille Street, St. Venera	21441014
Child Protective Services Unit (C.P.S.U.) at S.W.D.P. Gattard House, Blata 1-Bajda.	21249995, 21249996
Support Line at S.W.D.P	179
Police Victim Support Unit	21224002/9
Young People's Unit at Mt. Carmel Hospital	21411993, 21435467
Centra Hidma Socjali, St. Venera	21441311/3
Caritas, Lion Street, Floriana	21237935/ 21245358
O.A.S.I. Foundation, Gozo	21561196, 21563333

- Although all referrals are to be made through the head of school, the school counsellor should be the main contact person, to liaise with each support agency. This, however, does not exclude direct communications on an on-going basis, with the Guidance Teacher involved in the case. It is then, the duty of the Guidance Teacher to pass all relevant feedback to the school counsellor.

Feedback of information by Guidance staff, to subject teachers, resulting from liaison with support agencies, should be given, when such information is relevant to the pupils performance in that subject, or to their health and safety. The content of information to be communicated, should be agreed upon, between the agency and the guidance teacher concerned, and will be subject to the normal parameters of confidentiality.

CAREERS EDUCATION & GUIDANCE

- 1 Careers Education and Guidance is an essential part of the guidance programme of the school. It is the responsibility of the guidance team, together with the School Counsellor, to design and implement a suitable programme.
- 2 Students need to clarify their ideas about their future. They need to make well-informed, realistic career/vocational decisions, based on the knowledge of themselves and of the opportunities available.
- 3 Although, this preparation for the future is a continuous process, there are key-points at which they require specific help:
 - choice of subjects,
 - choice of post-secondary courses,
 - on proceeding to tertiary education.
4. When students need to make to make choices related to post-secondary education and training or careers, they need the help and support of:
 - parents/guardians,
 - guidance teachers,
 - subject teachers.

Elements of Careers Education, Programme

Through the careers education programme, guidance teachers should help pupils develop, in the following areas:

- Self-awareness and self-assessment.
- Decision making skills.
- Awareness of present/future opportunities.
- Preparation for life after leaving school.
- Awareness of information resources within and outside school.
- Skills in using sources of information.
- Awareness of the services and information provided by relevant agencies.

- Economic trend awareness.
- Self-presentation skills (including application and interview skills).
- Negotiating skills.
- Visits to the world of work (including appropriate preparation and follow-up).
- Individual interviews with Guidance Teacher on career path.

A Careers Education Programme should:

- be planned well ahead, keeping in mind the needs of the students.
- expose students, as appropriate, to professionals from the world of work
- include parents who should be given the opportunity to :
*attend meetings about choice processes,
and consult with Guidance Teachers.*
- Guidance Teachers are to avoid and challenge all gender stereotyping of careers, and to ensure equality of opportunity regardless of gender.
- All activities and materials available should be evaluated to ensure that careers education is non-discriminatory, in terms of gender, special needs, social class, race or beliefs.
- Liaison and co-ordination between the Guidance and Personal Social Education teams, will avoid overlapping and ensure maximum benefit to students.
- Well-researched, frequently updated careers information, is essential for an effective careers education of guidance programmes.

It is hoped that in the future students would have access to a computerized information service regarding careers, further education, vocational courses, etc.

- *Students, especially those in senior classes, should have access to Career, Orientation visits, talks and seminars, Careers Conventions, Careers DayWeek and other related programmes..*

TRANSITIONS

Pupils may face several transitions during their school life.

An effective programme can help students:

- deal with their feelings,
- make choices appropriate to their need,
- develop strategies for coping in new situations.

The key transitions for pupils are:

Primary to secondary transfer

FORM I

- Adapting to a new environment.
- Adapting to a new school organisation and structure.
- Adapting to new friendships.
- Adapting to new subjects, learning/teaching styles and assessment.

FORM II

- Initial thoughts about possible careers-pathways.
- Subject choice (Junior Lyceum).

FORM III

- Adapting to new subjects (Junior Lyceum),
- Subject choice (Secondary Schools).
- Technology Option (all schools).

FORM IV

- Adapting to new subjects/courses (Secondary School)
- Adapting to a new school/ course (Technology B, Agriculture, Building, Arts and Crafts).

FORMV

- Dealing with examination pressure.
- Deciding whether to continue with Post-secondary Education or to start work.
- Career planning/course choice.

Secondary to Post-Secondary transfer

- Making new friends
- Adapting to new courses, learning/teaching styles and assessment.
- Being aware that, learning from now, is increasingly their own responsibility.
- Adapting to a new school organisation and structure.
- Preparing for work, further training or University.

TRANSITIONS FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY

This transfer is a major step for all pupils because it involves:
changing, to a larger school,
a greater diversity of possible relationships,
a new curriculum,
contact with a greater number of teachers,
feelings, ranging from anxiety to excitement.

- Some pupils may experience this change, as an additional stress on top of the examination pressure they experience in Year 6.
- For many pupils this transition, takes place at a time when they are developing physically, socially and emotionally.
- Pupils who fail the Junior Lyceum Examination, may have a very low morale at the start of the school year.
- Some pupils adapt quickly to a new school, others do not settle in so easily, and academic performance may be affected.
- Many pupils need help and support to maintain feelings of emotional safety and security at this time.
- They need to develop a sense of belonging to a new school and to new groups. This means that relationships between staff and pupils are of paramount importance.
- If pupils feel emotionally secure, they are more likely to get the most out of the new school.

- Pupils moving to secondary schools, from abroad or from other catchment areas, may also experience extra insecurity, because they are joining a group of pupils with well-established patterns of friendship and a different cultural background.
- It is the joint responsibility of the primary school staff, and secondary school guidance team, together with the senior management of both schools, to identify the needs and concerns of pupils in Year 6 and to ensure, as far as possible, that their needs are addressed. This will enable pupils to make the transition as smooth as possible, and to gain maximum benefit from their secondary education.
- The success of primary-secondary transition arrangements, depends not only on guidance teachers, but on a **wider co-operation** among teachers and schools.
- This cooperation can include joint meetings, reciprocal visits, linked projects and information sharing.
- The climate should be one, which encourages pupils and parents, to express their needs and concerns.
- Before joining the new school, all pupils and their parents should have the opportunity of a familiarisation visit to the secondary school. The secondary school should provide them, with full information about the school and about the role of the Guidance Teacher.
- Guidance teachers should be introduced to parents during the first parents' meeting, when the role and services of the guidance teacher are explained.
- All Form I students should have the opportunity of meeting their Guidance Teacher, immediately upon entering school, or possibly during a meeting prior to starting school
- Pupils who change school in the middle of a scholastic year, are to be given all the care and support they might need by the Guidance Teachers, and by all the staff, so as to ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

GUIDANCE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

- A positive school climate is conducive to feelings of security and community. All staff should be involved in encouraging positive, caring behaviour. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all staff to promote positive approaches, which help pupils develop appropriate behaviour, through emphasising the unique value of individuals and a recognition of their qualities.
- It is the responsibility of the Guidance Teacher to help pupils look into their present attitudes and behaviours, and whenever appropriate, develop strategies relevant to their needs. Guidance Teachers may often help identify the real underlying problem to the misbehaviour being manifested, and help student deal with the **real** problem.
- Guidance Teachers should not form part of disciplinary procedures or sanctions. They should, however, be consulted and be informed when disciplinary actions are being taken against a pupil.
- In such cases the role of the Guidance Teacher is one of support, through individual guidance, so as to facilitate positive behaviour.
- However, Guidance Teachers still have the responsibility of pupil behaviour in their role as subject teachers.

SECTION 3

MANAGEMENT & ORGANISATION OF GUIDANCE

The effectiveness of the guidance programme in a school, depends on how well it is managed and coordinated.

COORDINATION

- The School Counsellor, is the person who is responsible for the coordination of guidance in the school, or group of schools. It is suggested that the Guidance Team have regular structured meetings to discuss and plan ahead.
- The Guidance Team, should keep open all lines of communications with other members of the staff in a most *respectful* and *professional* way. This includes respect for the *confidentiality* of information.
- It is desirable that all staff, be briefed on:
The guidance system operating within the school.
The role of the Guidance Teacher.
The School Counsellor's role.
The part they themselves as teachers have in guidance
- It is also highly desirable that the Guidance Team, the School Counsellor and the Form Teachers meet regularly, to discuss and coordinate their work since Form Teachers too, are responsible for pastoral care.

Continuity of care

It is also desirable, for students to remain under the responsibility of the same Guidance Teacher, as much as possible throughout their five-year course so as to promote continuity of care.

Meetings

National Meetings for Counsellors and Guidance Teachers are held regularly to share ideas, receive information and to listen to talks, and to discuss topics of particular interest. These meetings are always held on Wednesday mornings.

Projects

The Guidance and Counselling Unit at Floriana, co-ordinates various activities and projects at a national level. These include:

- Careers Convention .
- Careers Seminars (for school leavers).
- Careers Orientation Visits (ongoing basis).
- Tracer Study (Annual).
- Parenting Skills Programme (ongoing throughout the scholastic year).
- Safe School Programme (ongoing).
- Talks to parents and discussions on guidance related topics.
- Participation on School Development Days regarding Guidance related topics.
- In-service courses for teachers (inset).

Documentation

Documentation is necessary if Guidance is to be helpful in meeting the needs of all pupils. Pupils record cards (C.R.C) are to be kept in the Guidance Room. Personal Ratings are to be filled in by Form Teachers, in consultation with the Guidance Teacher.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GUIDANCE TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF

- The care of pupils is an important role of *every* teacher. It is therefore essential, that all teachers be aware of the role of guidance teachers and school counsellors, so as to be able to work cooperatively with them, in matters which concern the pupils they teach.
- Guidance Teachers, should ensure that they consult and work with all school staff (senior management, form teachers, subject teachers etc)
- Guidance Teachers, need to consult and work with the Form Teachers. Form Teachers usually know their pupils well. Furthermore, students often contact their Form Teacher when in difficulty.

When a pupil has a particular need or difficulty, which affects the learning process (e.g. health, vision, hearing, unusual behaviour), the guidance staff and all those who teach the pupil, should discuss ways in which these needs can be met in the classroom.

CO-OPERATION WITH PARENTS

Parents co-operation is fostered by:

- effective communication between guidance staff and parents,
- exchange of information and ideas through various activities organised by the school.

The guidance team of every school, is responsible for contacts with parents on matters related to guidance. Contacts should be made on a regular basis.

Relevant information is to be entered in the Cumulative Record Card of each pupil.

Full information is to be given to parents regarding guidance services.

Parents' Meetings are held:

- to discuss personal development and educational achievement,
- at key transition points,
- to discuss specific education developments/issues,
- to discuss specific problems.

Parents need to be informed on:

- how to contact the Guidance Team.
- the terms of confidentiality.

All this may be done through a note, or an insertion in the school news -letter.

INFORMATION ABOUT GUIDANCE SERVICES

At Systems level:

Information about Guidance Services and how it operates should be available to:

- Students and their parents or guardians
- Senior School Management Team
- Administrative staff
- Teaching staff
- Support agencies
- People in local industry and community agencies
- The public in general

Information is to be given in a language appropriate to its intended readership. It should contain details of:

- The purpose of guidance
- The way it is organised
- The services available within the Guidance System
- Details of the staff involved in guidance: (who they are, what they do and how they can be contacted.)
- Collaboration with other support agencies.

At school level:

- Have a regular input in the school newsletter/magazine, where students and parents are given information about the guidance and counselling services at the school.
- Organise a Guidance Services Bulletin Board, for information about names of guidance teachers and school counsellor and their availability.
- Organise seminars, talks and prevention programmes .
- Request meetings for specific target groups.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GUIDANCE TEAM AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Since guidance is central to achieving the educational aims of the school, the commitment of the Senior Management Team of the school, should be evident in:

- the type of support they give to the guidance team
- in the way the school operates
- in the policies of the school.

The Senior Management Team's support for guidance, can be given through, attendance at guidance meetings/activities in the school.

Honest, open and regular communications with the Guidance Team, should be encouraged. This includes seeking advice of the Guidance Team on all matters concerning the care, welfare and development of pupils.

On the other hand, the Guidance Team should keep the Head of School fully updated about their guidance work and its effectiveness, besides consulting him/her about any issues causing concern.

All this can be done through regular meetings between the Guidance Team and the Head of school.

The whole approach must be professional and collaborative.

EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDANCE

Evaluation should be regarded as:

- a positive, non-threatening aid for further development.
- an unbiased exercise to identify positive features and strengths, that need to be maintained/extended and to rectify negative aspects.
- a step that leads to decisions regarding priorities, targets and strategies that promise improvement and increased effectiveness.

Evaluation of Guidance should take place at least annually, with perhaps a limited number of aspects, to be tackled in depth each year. This could be based on the feedback of all parties involved:

- Parents & Students
- Members of School Staff
- Guidance Teachers
- School Counsellor
- Senior School Management Team
- E.O. Guidance & Counselling.

Evidence for evaluation may be collected through discussions, questionnaires, statistics, surveys and interviews.

Conclusions of an evaluation exercise should be formulated in reports, which summarize the major points of evaluation.

A plan for future action should then be formulated.

Care should be taken to ensure that:

- the aims of evaluation are clearly understood by all involved.
- the extent of the evaluation being undertaken is manageable

Appendix 1

SUGGESTED AREAS FOR EVALUATION

Checklist

1. Influence of Guidance Services on School Climate

- Do staff and pupils identify with aims, objectives and ethos of the school?
- What level of motivation and achievement do pupils have?
- How much does social cohesion exist?
- What are the attitudes of pupils to the school community?
- What type of relationship, level of respect and cooperation exists between staff and pupils?
- Has guidance had an impact on;-
the views of parents about the school?
the public image of the school?
the number of parents visiting the school for positive reasons, rather than, because there is "trouble"?

2. Relationships and Support

- How well does each pupil know, and is known by, at least one Guidance Teacher?
- What is the extent of the continuity of care?
- How many pupils self-refer to guidance⁹
- How is the pupils' self-esteem?
- Are they aware of their strengths and weaknesses?

3. Curricular Guidance

- Are pupils satisfied with their subject choices?
- Do pupils adapt to new subjects and learning methods?
- How effectively does guidance help pupils make important transitions?

4. Careers Education

- How effective is guidance, in helping pupils make choices of career and post-secondary courses?

5. Student Behaviour

- How effective is guidance, in contributing to the establishment of a positive climate, for learning in the school?
- Are pupils respectful towards others?
- Are pupils respectful towards each other?
- Do pupils have a sense of responsibility?

6. Liaisoning

- Do all members of staff understand what guidance is about⁰
- What are their opinions about guidance in general?
- What kind of relationship exists between Guidance Teachers, members of staff, pupils, parents and other support agencies?
- Which type of cases needed referral to other agencies?
- What were the outcomes of these referrals?
- Are other members of staff involved in guidance? E.g. Administration, Form teachers and subject teachers?
- What is the perception of the role and effectiveness of guidance amongst pupils and parents?

7. Management of guidance

- What is the extent and quality of communication between the guidance team and members of the staff management team?
- To which extent do all pupils, staff and parents understand the aims and objectives of guidance in the school?
- Does the management team give due importance to guidance matters?
- How effective is the relationship within the guidance team?
- What is the level of cooperation between guidance teachers and other teachers?
- Is the school's Guidance Programme meeting the pupils' needs?

- How effective is the relationship between the Guidance Teachers and the School Counsellor
- How effective are the guidance team meetings?

8. Documentation

- Are pupils' records accurate and up to date?
- What use is made of these records in the best interest of pupils?
- Is record keeping simply a paper exercise?
- How is confidentiality maintained?

9. Professional Development

- What qualifications do **those**, involved in guidance hold?
- What are the values and **range of** skills of the guidance team as a whole?
- Do Guidance Teachers **have** opportunities for in-service training? Do they avail themselves of it
- Do Guidance Teachers feel **their work** is valued?
- How are Guidance Teachers **projecting** their professional image?

10. Resources

- Are there adequate **accommodation** and facilities for Guidance?
- Is the complement of Guidance Teachers adequate?
- Is the allocated guidance time adequate?
- Is there an up-to-date documentation, including information about other agencies, services, facilities, courses, careers, etc.?

Appendix 2

POSITION DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Is responsible for the running of a guidance and counselling service in one large school, or a number of small schools;
2. Works in continuous collaboration with the Education Officer, Guidance and Counselling;
3. Liaises with the Guidance Teacher/s in the school he/she is posted to, and with the Guidance Teacher/s in the other school he/she is assigned;
4. Advises parents and helps students in making educational and vocational choices;
5. Co-ordinates the work of Form Teachers and Guidance Teachers in collaboration with the Heads of School concerned;
6. Advises Heads of School and staff on the compilation and use of cumulative record cards, and ensures that these record cards are properly kept;
7. Advises on the profiling of students;
8. Advises on and encourages a healthy all-round development of students;
9. Helps students with problems;
10. Conducts personal counselling sessions with individuals, and/or with groups of students;
11. Facilitates referrals of students to other specialists and services;
12. Organises activities and services, during normal school hours at institution and system levels, in collaboration with the Education Officer, Guidance and Counselling.;
13. Organises any other activities on a voluntary basis,

Appendix 3

POSITION DESCRIPTION OF GUIDANCE TEACHER

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Performs the duties of a Teacher (see Position for Teacher);
2. Assists and guides students in their personal, educational and emotional development;
3. Caters for particular needs of students referred to him/her by other teachers or school administrators, and prepares any reports and makes the necessary contacts within the Education Division for external referrals if, and when required;
4. Advises parents on the personal development and behaviour, subject options and career choices of their children;
5. Organises, meetings (including talks, discussions, seminars, etc.), for parents as agreed with the Head of School;
6. Prepares students and provides the necessary information for subject options and career choice
7. Organises visits by students to educational institutions and career related establishments;
8. Co-operates in the organisation of Guidance and Counselling activities and services at school and system level;
9. Works under the direction of Counsellors and Guidance and Counselling Education Officers.
10. Facilitates the transition of students from primary to secondary school, and from secondary to another school, or to school leaving;
11. Organises guidance and counselling spaces and facilities at school.