



# **Digitised Guidance Plan 2020-2021**

## **Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford**

**Chairperson:** Mr. John McGovern  
**Principal:** Ms. Aoife Mulrennan  
**Date:** 07/10/2020

## **Digitised Guidance for Academic Year 2020-2021**

### **For implementation in the Event of the Guidance Service having to move online following school closures due to Covid 19**

This document can be included in the schools' Whole School Guidance Plan or stand alone where the provision of digitalised Guidance in school is required.

Digitalised Guidance is an emerging area of guidance provision which began nationwide in March 2020, following Covid19 school closures.

This document is based on the NCGE Template which was produced in consultation with the Department of Education in 2020.

This is a working document which will be reviewed and updated regularly in the school as the landscape of digitalised guidance evolves over the short and medium term.

It should be noted that this document will eventually be an 'add-on' to a detailed and annually reviewed Whole School Guidance Plan.

## **Digitalised Whole School Guidance Insert for Guidance Plan/Whole School Guidance Plan:**

**Academic Year 2020/2021**

### **Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford**

#### **Introduction to Digitalised Guidance**

This document outlines the decisions made at local school level about the logistics of digitalised / online school guidance provision in our school.

All content was discussed and agreed between School Management and the School Guidance Counsellor(s). The approach to digitalised Guidance in our school is documented here in line with:

**A Whole School Guidance Framework document (NCGE, 2017)**

<https://www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework>

**(Covid-19) Support information for Guidance Counsellors in Schools (NCGE, 2020)**

<https://www.ncge.ie/resource/covid-19-ncge-support-information-GC-schools>

**Continuity of Guidance Counselling - Guidelines for schools providing online support for students (DES, 2020)**

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Post-Primary-School-Policies/Policies/continuity-of-guidance-counselling-guidelines-for-schools-providing-online-support-for-students.pdf>

**Continuity of Schooling (DES, 2020)**

[www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/continuity-of-schooling/continuity-of-schooling.html](http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/continuity-of-schooling/continuity-of-schooling.html)

Digitalised Guidance is provided in our school in line with the continuum of support model (NCGE, 2017 p12): Guidance for A Few, Guidance for Some, Guidance for All. This resource outlines the provision of digitalised guidance in line with that continuum. The first section outlines the logistical approach for 'Guidance for A Few,' a second section notes the approach for 'Guidance for Some' and the third section refers to 'Guidance for All.' In addition, a final section outlines how our school will coordinate Whole School Guidance, should the school have to close for part of the year or if some staff must self-isolate.

**Guidance for A Few:**

In Meán Scoil Mhuire ALL students will have access to one-to-one supports from teachers, support teams and the Guidance Counsellor, where appropriate.

Parents / Guardians and students will be informed that these services are available by:

1. Distribution of an information leaflet/email to Year Groups at the beginning of the school year and parents notified of this email via text.
2. A notification by text if our school must close during academic year 2020/2021

In each of these communications, parents are invited to contact the school directly by phone 0433346608 or email [info@scoilmhuielongford.ie](mailto:info@scoilmhuielongford.ie) should they wish to discuss the provision of such supports.

In *Meán Scoil Mhuire* we agree to undertake our '**Guidance for a Few**' (one-to-one sessions) as follows:

Platform Used:	Microsoft Teams / Zoom
How and when students may be contacted:	A schedule of virtual meetings or individual sessions arranged from week to week may be planned with students by email/ Teams during a limited time frame (e.g. following the 'normal' local school timetable, 9am-4pm). Contact with students should not occur outside of these agreed times. Personal phone numbers will not be exchanged between the Guidance Counsellor and students / parents / guardians.
Contact with parents may arise when:	A Child Protection issue arises.  Our approach to contacting parents in this event is: The school Mobile may be used by Guidance counsellor to contact parents in emergencies or where a parent has requested contact via phone, having initially made contact with the Guidance Counsellor by email.
Students are identified as needing one-to-one support through several school	<u>Self-Referral</u> – students may self-refer by sending an email to the Guidance Counsellor. Students are notified about how to connect with the guidance counsellor at the beginning of the school year.

processes:	<p><u>Student support team:</u> Teachers are aware they can contact the student support team/Year Head by email if they are concerned about a student. The student support team/Year Head will then take appropriate action which may include referral to the Guidance Counsellor.</p> <p><u>Parents:</u> If parents are concerned for their children, they may contact the year head via initial direct contact with the school by phone or via the email <a href="mailto:info@scoilmhuirelongford.ie">info@scoilmhuirelongford.ie</a>.</p> <p><u>Other Avenues:</u> We will monitor the other means through which students are referred this year and will add those means to this document for future years.</p>
Frequency of Contact:	<p>The agreed procedures to facilitate students to be notified of their initial appointment in advance in Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford is <i>through school email</i>.</p> <p>Further contact will be agreed with students as appropriate during each meeting.</p> <p>This will be clearly communicated to the student in each meeting and/or at the beginning of the series of sessions e.g. 'We will work together for five sessions and review our plan on the fifth session'</p>
Session Length:	<p>Each one-to-one meeting would last approximately 30- 40 minutes, depending on the issues being dealt with and time needed. In the event of an emergency this time may be shortened or lengthened as appropriate.</p>
Contract:	<p>A contract will be made with students at the beginning of the one-to one sessions as it would have been in a 'face to face' situation (this can be done verbally initially and in writing as sessions progress).</p> <p>Included in this contract, it will be noted that neither party will record or take photographs of the session. Students are required to be seated as would be the case for a i-school one to one face to face session. Mic and camera should be switched on unless agreed otherwise at start of session between Guidance Counsellor and student for example where Teams phone call is being used due to poor internet signal or express preference of the student.</p> <p>Students and parents are informed that a record of the session will be kept by the Guidance Counsellor, in line with normal professional practice and the school's 'Confidentiality Policy.'</p>
DLP and DDLP:	<p>If digitalised guidance is taking place, our school procedures for communication with the DLP and the DDLP are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonecall to DDP</li> <li>• If contact is not made via phone then email DDP</li> <li>• Phone call to DDLP if email response not received after 24 hours in non emergency situations</li> </ul>

	<p>If an emergency/child protection issue arises during a time when digitalised guidance is taking place, the agreed protocol is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Parents via phone</li> <li>• In the event parents are not contactable ring Emergency 999 and notify Gardaí</li> </ul>
Communication with management:	<p>School management are fully aware of and have agreed on all aspects of this document.</p> <p>This document was discussed and agreed on 24/9/2020</p> <p>It is agreed that this document will be reviewed In September 2021</p> <p>The guidance counsellor will update management as appropriate on how digitalised one-to-one guidance appointments are progressing as often as necessary or during weekly Guidance/wellbeing Meetings.</p>

Record Keeping & GDPR:	<p>A record of every one-to-one guidance counselling meeting will be kept by the Guidance Counsellor and stored appropriately in line with normal professional practice.</p> <p>Our school uses one of</p> <p>a) the NCGE one-to-one meeting record, which can be downloaded and used as an editable PDF document or printed off for use as paper records.  <a href="https://www.ncge.ie/resource/record-templates-guidance-counselling-one-one-meetings-students">https://www.ncge.ie/resource/record-templates-guidance-counselling-one-one-meetings-students</a></p> <p>or</p> <p>b) The Guidance Counsellor's Printed One to One Personal Counselling Record Sheets. A copy of this is to be found in the Guidance Counselling Resources Section of the School Guidance Plan.</p> <p>We store paper records. The Guidance Counsellor ensures these are safely stored in a locked cabinet or drawer on their premises are not accessible to others. Such records are returned to the school premises as soon as is practicable.</p> <p>ALSO</p> <p>We reserve the right to securely save our records when necessary using a password protected work laptop. The files would be saved into a dedicated folder and are in no way accessible by a third party.</p>
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## Guidance for Some:

A definition of 'Guidance for Some' can be found on the 'Whole School Guidance Framework' document (NCGE, 2017 p13)

[www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework](http://www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework)

In Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford digitalised 'Guidance for Some' will operate in line with our school's 'Remote Learning Policy' as follows:

One Weekly 5<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance Class and one Weekly 6<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance class for all base room groups as per the School Timetabled times, days of the week and of 1 Hour duration maximum.

One weekly Wellbeing class with each first Year Base room Group as per school Timetabled times, days of the week and of 1 Hour duration maximum. These operate on an 11 week modular basis.

Third Years will receive a minimum of one class around subject choice per year. If not received in the classroom on school premises, then this will take place online and be set up via Teams/Email by Guidance Counsellor(s)

Depending on demand and resourcing, group sessions may take place for smaller groupings in relation to specific topics e.g. UCAS applications, specific career paths etc. An invite to such sessions will be issued by the Guidance Counsellor(s) via Group email. Such sessions will include a Q & A section for students to have queries answered.

Students are always welcome to send queries to the GC re concerns or queries relating to Guidance matters during normal school hours. These in turn will be answered in a timely fashion bearing in mind constraints caused by the busyness of the service at any given time.

## Guidance for All:

A definition of 'Guidance for All' can be found on the 'Whole School Guidance Framework' document (NCGE, 2017 p12)

[www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework](http://www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework)

In Meán Scoil Mhuire Longford digitalised 'Guidance for All' will operate in line with our school's 'Remote Learning Policy' as follows:

One Weekly 5<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance Class and one Weekly 6<sup>th</sup> Year Guidance class for all base room groups as per the School Timetabled times, days of the week and of 1 Hour duration maximum.

One weekly Wellbeing class with each first Year Base room Group as per school Timetabled times, days of the week and of 1 Hour duration maximum. These operate on an 11 week modular basis.

Third Years will receive a minimum of one class around subject choice per year. If not received in the classroom on school premises, then this will take place online and be set up via Teams/Email by Guidance Counsellor(s)

Whole school Assembly/Year Group Assembly can be used by Guidance Counsellor(s) to connect with all Students.

Year Group School E-mail system can be used by Guidance Counsellor(s) to disseminate information to students and keep students updated with regard to careers information, personal development, study skills, subject information etc. In the case of Senior students this will be determined by the amount of information coming in. Some times of year are busier and more regular emails will be required. Some times are quieter and a weekly or monthly email may suffice.

Students are advised to regularly check their school email for such content.

There is a padlet page for students in relation to wellbeing which is accessible to all online.

Wellbeing

<https://padlet.com/mfallon9/z6jtz2zpi7y6>

There is also a padlet page for students in relation to Careers which is accessible to all online.

Careers

<https://padlet.com/mfallon9/h62kuf0ffj12>

These padlet pages are updated on a regular basis and content adjusted or added to as necessary.

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## Coordination of Whole School Guidance:

This section describes how the school approaches the management and coordination of whole school guidance if a blended/digitalised approach must be undertaken in our school.

In so far as possible, weekly Guidance & wellbeing meetings will continue via Teams/Zoom as per school Timetable during periods of school Closure due to Covid 19.

The Student Support Teams will also meet weekly in so far as possible as per school Timetable.

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The content of this document has been approved by Aoife Mulrennan (Principal), Mairead Lyons (Deputy Principal), Margarita Fallon & Anita Griffin (Guidance Counsellors) on 24/9/2020.

Approved by BOM on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020

This document will be reviewed and updated September 2021