

PRINCIPALS! PLEASE FACILITATE US!

FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH NAPD DIRECTOR, CLIVE BYRNE, BRIAN MOONEY EXPLAINS THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE COUNSELLING SUPERVISION SCHEME AND HIGHLIGHTS THE VITAL ROLE OF TIMETABLING IN MAKING IT WORK

As we draw to the end of the current academic year, I would like on behalf of the National Steering Committee for Counselling Supervision, to thank you for your co-operation, in ensuring that this system, provided to your qualified Guidance Counsellor, is working effectively throughout the country. This service is fully funded and directed by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Science, is administered by Monaghan Education Centre on behalf of TES, and is open to all qualified Guidance Counsellors. This makes them eligible to secure appointment to a permanent post in a second-level school, under the terms set out by circular letter PPT 12/05.

MAXIMISING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE

The purpose of the service is to ensure that the personal counselling aspect of the work of the Guidance Counsellor is delivered in a manner which maximises the quality of service provided to the individual student. As you are aware, both from an ethical and legal perspective, only those persons who hold a professionally-recognised counselling qualification, and are in ongoing supervision of their counselling work, are deemed to be operating in a manner protected by the law

DES ADDRESSING ITS LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Education and Science, by funding the counselling supervision service to Guidance Counsellors, is addressing the legal requirements on their part, to ensure that any counselling being provided in schools, by personnel in receipt of DES paid salaries, is taking place in a manner, which meets the highest ethical and legal standards.

THE FACILITATION ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

School management, by facilitating the attendance of any Guidance Counsellor in their employment, at the five times yearly counselling supervision sessions, which take place mainly in your local Education Centre, on Tuesday afternoons from 2-4pm (alternate afternoons apply in Cork, Kerry, and Donegal), is ensuring that any counselling being provided to students in their care, within the school, is being delivered to the highest professional and ethical standards. Guidance Counsellors by ensuring that they both register for

and attend their local counselling supervision service, are ensuring that the quality and integrity of their personal counselling work meets the highest professional and ethical standards.

ADMINISTRATION BY THE INSTITUTE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

The DES and School Management have shown great foresight in putting in place this service throughout the entire country over the past two years. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors, through its sixteen branches throughout the country, administers the organisation of the individual cluster groups of Guidance Counsellors and the appointment, on an annual basis, of suitably qualified Counselling Supervisors, to provide the service. The Counselling Supervisors are themselves provided with in-service annually, funded by the TES of the DES.

GROWING DEMANDS ON GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

Given the growing range of social issues facing our students today, it is gratifying that this initiative has been undertaken by the Department of Education and Science to ensure that a certain level of professional counselling service is available in our schools. As you are aware, the duties and responsibility of Guidance Counsellors go far beyond the personal counselling area.

As we jointly prepare our students, to set out on the journey of life, where they will constantly have to evaluate, their next appropriate educational or employment decision, the lifelong career decision-making skills, the delivery of which are central to all School Guidance Planning, make huge demands on Guidance Counsellors' time and resources. Balancing the demands of the personal, social and educational aspects of their work is the task facing Guidance Counsellors every day. Without the ongoing support of both Principals and Deputy Principals, this task would be impossible.

APPRECIATION OF PRINCIPALS' SUPPORT

On behalf of all Guidance Counsellors working in our second level schools, and my fellow members of the National Steering Committee, made up of representatives of the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Science, the Departments Inspectorate, Monaghan Education Centre, and the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, may I thank you for your cooperation in delivering this service throughout the country. Without your willingness to facilitate your Guidance Counsellors' attendance at this service, by not timetabling them for classroom contact on the appropriate afternoon, it would not have been possible to deliver the service nationwide.



CONTACTS

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You can read more about the Counselling Supervision Service on
<http://www.metc.ie/igc>