



St Tiernan's Community School, Parkvale, Balally, Dublin

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Reporting to the Community on SSE

OUR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT - Community

2021/2022

In the last year, we have looked at teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well. This is what we discovered:

In our Target Area of our School Improvement plan we focused on Teaching and Learning **Domain 3: Teachers Collective Collaborative Practise** - Teachers collectively develop and implement consistent and dependable formative and summative assessment practices. (*School Self Evaluation Guidelines 2016-2020*).

We received a whole school Formative Assessment CDP/Presentation from the PDST at our staff meeting in September. We set high expectations for our students while providing a high level of support. This manifests in a range of whole-school teaching and learning strategies including the use of learning intentions, success criteria, effective feedback and questioning, visual verbal squares, highlighting numeracy in our subjects and providing engaging, active lessons for our students. Alongside our pedagogical strategies, we are committed to ensuring that students receive meaningful feedback on their summative assessments by means of termly reports, which also show attendance and punctuality figures.

The establishment of an AP1 position with the responsibility for the development and improvement of the overall teaching and learning in our school demonstrates this commitment. This post holder speaks at each staff meeting to induct and upskill our teaching staff, liaises with Senior Management and the school leadership team, attends DEIS PDST support meetings and has initiated the collection of data, resources and feedback from staff in order to continue and improve effective practice in the school.

All of our classroom practices, teaching, learning and assessment strategies and reporting on student progress are underpinned and informed by our DEIS action plan. Our DEIS action plan has been formulated as a direct result of teacher and student feedback in relation to areas of teaching, learning and assessment procedures that we continually strive to improve.

We wanted to place a strong focus on multiple forms of assessment to meet the needs of vulnerable learners. For the best learning to take place there needs to be an environment that is encouraging, supportive and safe for the students to express themselves. Student feedback is essential to creating this environment. The student voice has played an important role in providing feedback through the challenging times of Covid-19. This informed our targets and we were able to tackle real issues that were highlighted in the classroom.

From feedback gathered from staff, students and parents the following has been observed:

With the reopening of schools, it has become evident that remote learning left a lot of students with deficits in their literacy, numeracy and overall academic progress. The digital divide emphasized and widened the gap in educational attainment. We recognized the need for a holistic and concerted support plan to help students transition back to engagement in school life.

In consultation with parents, the need to develop our Transitions Programme emerged and therefore a two-day induction and transition programme for incoming first years will be implemented. Based on feedback from staff at our final meeting of the year, it was proposed that students in all year groups be given additional time and support to transition back into school as part of our Wellbeing programme next year.

We have also identified the need to allocate specific interventions and supports to support those students who may struggle with this return to school.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 and school closures, our Parents Association involvement has waned. We propose to improve membership through engagement with 1st year parents at induction and transition meetings. The return to in-person Parent/Teacher meetings next year provides an excellent opportunity to promote parental involvement in the school.

This is what we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:

What we are doing well

- Developing new and effective teaching and learning strategies
- Differentiated approach to improve attainment
- Promoting our school in the community with the development of our school website and the introduction of a new school app
- The introduction of a school House System (a motivating, reward structure) to promote peer mentoring, engagement in extracurricular activities, attendance, student leadership and attainment
- Production of a professional Open Evening video, made accessible on our website
- New St Tiernan's PE uniform as requested by the other stakeholders in education: our students and parents
- The continued use of Google Classroom for homework assignments and revision materials
- The development of a new whole-school wellbeing programme
- Student Support Team weekly meeting with focus on vulnerable learners
- School social media highlighting excellent work the students were taking part in
- Continued development of our Guidance Programme with an emphasis on Programme Choice and Transitions
- Introduction of hot meals provided to all students daily
- Supporting our students academically, socially and emotionally

What we could do better

- Whole-staff approach to Study Skills workshops
- Student council to set up focus groups to inform attendance and motivation
- Improved monitoring of attendance data to inform targeted and effective interventions
- Evaluation review and analysis of 3rd and 6th year exam results to identify specific needs and to implement effective supports
- Staff CPD on strategies to support students in emotional resilience
- Improve communication and engagement with parents via a school app and website

This is what we are now going to work on:

- Improving our Transitions Programme and procedures
- Promotion and use of school app to improve communication with parents
- Continued CPD for staff in new and innovative teaching and learning strategies
- A differentiated curriculum to address the needs of our high achievers
- Promotion of our new PE hall and sports facilities
- To improve and develop our whole-school wellbeing programme

This is what you can do to help:

- **Establish a routine:** Every family is different so do what suits your circumstances in creating a routine. When making routines focus on areas such as breakfast and getting out to school on time/ when and where homework is done / the evening meal / screen-free time/ bedtime.
- **Time keeping:** Help students leave for school on time. Being present in school will directly link to better grades and build confidence in your child's ability.
- **Help them organise themselves:** Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right books or gear, can be quite a challenge during the first few weeks. Supervise the packing of the school bag the night before, with a copy of their timetable from their journal.
- **Take an interest in homework:** Every child will be different in the level of support and persuasion they need to get their homework done. We advise to check their homework journal each night and make sure they know what work they need to have done by when. Conversations about what they're learning helps to keep you in touch.
- **Checking in:** Signing their homework journal every week is a great way to see how they are getting on and if there are any messages from the teacher.

- **Stock up on food:** They need a nutritious breakfast and food for both break times to sustain them through a long school day.
- **Sleep:** When you learn something new, the best way to remember it is to sleep on it. That's because sleeping helps strengthen memories you've formed throughout the day. It also helps to link new memories to earlier ones. Good quality sleep is really important to your child's development and learning. Encourage this by switching off all screens 1 hour before bedtime.
- **Build a relationship with the school:** Take every opportunity to attend information evenings, parent-teacher meetings, social events and get involved with the parents' association. "A lot of change that happens in schools actually comes through the parents' associations," says Paul Byrne, president of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals.
- **Fresh Air and exercise:** It helps to improve concentration, memory, and classroom behavior. Children who exercise perform better academically and have better memory.

When communicating this summarised report and improvement plan to parents and the community, We are highlighting specific actions for improvement where they consider parental awareness and involvement are particularly relevant.