



**St Kieran's College**  
**College Road, Kilkenny**  
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# School Self Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

September 2016 - May 2020

## **Outcomes of our last Improvement Plan 2013-2016**

### **Target Areas Identified in SIP 2015**

- *Students starting in 2015 will need more work in the areas of Units of measure, Area & Scale, Decimals and Word Problems.*

This target was identified in May 2015 and teachers have identified methodologies in their own subject areas to address this during the academic year 2015/2016. Teaching and learning in these problem areas will be assessed in the coming academic year 2016/2017.

- *47% of First Years claim that they do not get the opportunity to display work in tables, graphs or charts in their subjects.*

Our findings inform us that students are now more aware of the visibility of numeracy in classrooms. However, we may need to revisit the area of whether or not we are displaying students' own work as charts, graphs etc.

- *45% of First years say that teachers do not use a common approach to similar calculations.*

Teachers Using a similar approach to calculations will be addressed in August 2016.

- *62% of First Years claim that they like Maths - Would like to improve this over a three year Junior Award Cycle.*

This is an ongoing target and will be revisited by the numeracy group in the academic year 2016/2017.

- *Subject teachers identified measure, scale, decimals and ration as areas of difficulty for improvement.*

Again this is an ongoing target. It is hoped that our numeracy strategies are currently addressing these areas of difficulty and possible improvements will be accessed in the academic year 2016/17 through student survey.

## **Methodology used in School Self-Evaluation Report and School Improvement Plan**

This School Self-Evaluation Report and School Improvement Plan is based on data gathered through both qualitative and quantitative methods. This included:

- Parents' online survey
- Student online surveys
- Student questionnaires
- Focus group discussions with students
- Focus group discussions with Students' Council members
- Teachers' online surveys
- Staff discussion

## Summary of the main strengths

- The visibility of numeracy in classrooms helps to create a numeracy rich environment in the school
- All teachers are engaging with both literacy and numeracy strategies and this is echoed in student questionnaires
- Students are aware of the importance of Maths in their lives and generally tend to aim to sit the Higher level Maths papers
- Marked improvement in engagement with the 'Reading for Pleasure' initiative through increased access to the reading area/library, Drop Everything and Read classes for 1st years and paired reading initiative with TY's and 1st years.
- The introduction of AFL 'comment only' marking in the 1st year October assessments as part of their induction process.
- Strengths echoed in our investigation of teaching and learning:
  - ❖ Interesting and engaging lessons (72% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Satisfaction with subject choice (90% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Explanation of new concepts (75% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Encouragement from teachers (88% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Setting targets and goals for improving (77% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Feeling challenged in their lessons (79% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Teachers listen to questions and address them (88% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Getting regular homework (94% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Taking responsibility for their own learning (93% strongly agree and agree)
  - ❖ Teachers view Collaborative Practice as a positive aspect of their work
  - ❖ Most parents are happy with how their child is getting on in school.
  - ❖ Parents are happy with the reports they receive from the school.
  - ❖ Parents agree that teaching is good in the school.
  - ❖ Parents are happy with the amount of homework their child receives.
- Feedback from teachers on our Collaborative Staff day was extremely positive with 84% of staff agreeing that it was extremely worthwhile and 69% of staff indicating that they would be willing to lead a module on our forthcoming staff day in 2018.
- Feedback from the students council survey on 'student voice' indicated a strong value placed on communication with all school stakeholders.

## Summary of the main areas requiring improvements

### **Literacy:**

- Subject departments should display relevant Keywords in all classrooms and incorporate the teaching and assessment of these key words in their lessons on a regular basis
- Subject teachers need to continue working with Word problems
- Greater promotion of the awareness of oral literacy is required
- Focus on the importance of presentation skills in all classes
- Encourage more group work in the classroom
- Encourage reading for meaning as part of homework
- Most teachers have a literacy rich environment

- The promotion of reading through displays in certain areas around the school (The red read wall)

**AFL:**

- Gather data on AFL strategies to be implemented in the school this academic year 2016/17
- Subject departments will continue to evaluate and adopt assessment for learning approaches that will work for their subject
- Further embed the practice of formative questioning and feedback by all teachers
- Continued use of AFL strategies in the classroom: group/pair work, success criteria, formative feedback, comment only assessment, peer/self assessment and reflection strategies
- Learning Intentions to be displayed and referred to throughout all lessons
- The further development of formative assessment and formative feedback, AFL techniques and collaborative practices through Professional Learning Groups in 2018/19
- Work of Professional Learning Group, to continue with the aim of strengthening and further embedding AFL techniques.

## Actions and Targets for the School Improvement Plan 2016-2020

### **Teaching and Learning - Assessment for Learning**

To adopt an Assessment for Learning approach in the school by implementing AFL strategies.

- Learning Intentions are to be displayed at the beginning of class.
- Subject departments identify their aims for a target year group and include the aim in subject department plans.
- White boards to be altered to provide space for Learning Intentions.

That a whole school approach is taken in the implementation of Formative Assessment.

- First Year October school reports will apply comments rather than grades.
- Formative Assessment to be embraced in class work and homework assignments throughout the school year.

Timeframe for action: 2016-2017

Review Date: May 2017

A whole school approach to be taken in the further implementation and embedding of Formative Assessment and Formative Feedback to the full student body.

- Further instructional guidance is needed for staff -see stats from survey.
- Provision of in-service to all staff on FA and FF.
- Formation of a Professional Learning Group to assist staff in engaging with the strategy and to encourage peer observation.

To be implemented by senior management and staff throughout the 2018/2019 school year.

Review Date: May 2019- See feedback from PLG members.

### **Teaching and Learning: Learner Outcomes**

Greater participation of students in whole school planning.

- Student voice will be recognised through increased involvement of students in whole school activities.
- Student voice will be further developed through increased communication with the student's council at assemblies.

More in-depth analysis/evaluation of student knowledge and understanding.

- Use of 'Effective Questioning' in classes by teachers.
- Further instructional guidance through the formation of a Professional Learning Group (PLG) to further embed the practice of effective questioning.
- To maintain communication with parents through the use of the journal led by class tutors.
- To promote collaboration between year heads and class tutors with regard to the use of the journal in a positive analysis.
- Regular assemblies.
- Reporting on positive behaviour and achievements.

To be addressed in the course of the 2018/2019 school year

### **Teaching and Learning: teachers' collaborative/collective practice**

Teachers will continue to work together in a structured way in order to share expertise, skills and resources in supporting the students in their classes.

- Team teaching -SEN teachers supporting main class groups.
- Sharing of resource folders on NAS
- Four Croke Park hours to be scheduled throughout the year to allow for subject planning.
- SSE subcommittees to work with teachers - continue this numeracy and literacy.
- Whole school collaborative planning day scheduled in November annually to facilitate peer CPD.
- Magenta Principles to be shared through peer CPD.

Timeframe: 2018 -2020

Review: May 2020

### **Teaching and Learning: teacher individual practice**

Teachers will continue to implement learning intentions and refer to them in the course of their lessons and aim to strengthen this practice at Senior Cycle. ( see feedback from staff surveys 2018/2019)

The development of strategies to measure the success of the implementation of AFL/Written formative feedback techniques and strategies throughout the year.

- Formation of an AFL committee to monitor student work.

Timeframe: 2018-2020

Review: April/May 2020

Senior management and the SSE team will monitor the implementation of the Improvement Plan 2016 and 2020 and will publish an annual progress report.

**Part 3: Targets for the next academic year (2020/2021)**

Due to circumstances during the COVID19 pandemic investigative procedures within our school community during the 2019/2020 academic were interrupted and therefore we have set targets based on a more limited amount of data gathered than usual. The following areas have been identified for improvement for the next academic year:

1. **Assessment & Reporting:** The new Junior Cycle reform demands the need to evaluate the schools' reporting and assessment procedures. Work has already begun to improve the quality of feedback given to students and we plan to continue providing formative feedback to students on a whole school level. Our target this year is **to investigate current formative feedback practices** and to seek input from various stakeholders through online surveys and focus group discussions. This will add to data previously gathered in this area.
2. **AFL:** A survey carried out amongst a focus group of twenty students from all Junior Cycle classes indicates the need to further develop and embed AFL strategies. While students demonstrated a good understanding of AFL strategies, the survey highlighted a need to **continue working towards more highly effective practice of AFL strategies in the classroom.**
3. **Reflection** plays an important role in current educational reform and 10% of Junior Cycle exams is based on students reflecting on their learning. Reflection of this nature requires a knowledge and understanding of the language of reflection. As part of investigative procedures during the academic year 2019/2020 an online survey on 'developing students' reflection skills' was distributed to teachers. The results highlight that reflective practice within our school can be considered as somewhat 'effective' but further measures are needed to reach 'highly effective' practice. Therefore, our target is **to develop strategies to improve student reflection on their own learning through the work of the PLG (Professional Learning Group).** For this to be successful the language of learning also needs to be developed throughout the entire school body and because of this our second target in this area is **to develop the language of learning with Second Year students throughout the school.**