

Cabinteely Community School



Learning and Assessment Policy **(Working Document)**

Ratified March 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 School Mission Statement

Cabinteely Community School is a kind, caring and vibrant learning community which supports the wellbeing and the academic, spiritual and creative growth of every student.

We welcome students of all ethnicities, abilities, genders and faith traditions, as equal members of our community

We identify with our Ursuline founders and their love of education.

Our Core Values

Our core values guide our policies, our procedures and how we work with our staff and students. These core values are;

Care - We all need to belong and be cared for in a safe environment in order to learn

Courage - We show courage by making the right choices and committing to learning Support

- We will be the best we can be by working hard and working together

1.2 Definition

Learning is “**a process that leads to change, which occurs as a result of experience and increases the potential for improved performance and future learning**” (Ambrose et al, 2010, p. 3). The change in the learner may happen at the level of knowledge, attitude or behavior.

The term “Assessment” refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student’s learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs.

Learning and assessment are inextricably entwined processes which when most effective result in students becoming independent and curious learners.

1.3 Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

1. Define “learning” and “assessment” and describe the processes of learning and assessment in the school
2. Link both processes to the LAOS 2022-26 framework and to specific statements of effective/very effective practice

3. Give an overview of the planning framework within which subject departments identify targets for learning and assessment to address the school's LAOS targets
4. Lay out the ways in which all students are catered for in the organisation of learning and assessment
5. Describe how students participate in the process of learning and assessment and in the achievement of the school's targets - student voice/participation
6. Identify the roles of all staff in learning and assessment
7. Ensure that learning and assessment goals feature strongly in the school's DEIS targets and measures and address improvements in Attainment, Attendance, Literacy, Numeracy, Transitions, Partnership with Parents and Others
8. How reporting and feedback to parents is provided
9. The process of reflection on learning and assessment targets, measures and outcomes

1.4 Legislation

The Education Act 1998 requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results to students and their parents/guardians. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. In keeping with our school's Mission Statement, we seek to enable each child to develop his/her full potential.

The school's policy on assessment and reporting procedures are guided by the various legislative requirements enshrined within the following documents:

- The Data Protection (Amendments) Act (2003).
- The Equal Status Act (2000).
- The Education (Welfare) Act (2000).
- The Education for persons with special Educational Needs Act (2004).
- The Freedom of Information Act (1997,2003).
- Looking at Our Schools (2016 and 2022)

2. RATIONALE FOR PROCESSES OF LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

2.1 What Processes are in Place?

Since 2018, the school has engaged with a Strategic Plan or Vision in which the central theme has been learning.

2.2 Our Vision/Strategic Plan 2018-2023

In 2018, we created the framework for a school improvement plan which consisted of eight areas of development. The original eight areas in became nine in 2019 when we made SEN a separate area of development based on the needs of the students.

These areas were:

1. Mission Statement, Ethos & Wellbeing
2. Positive Behaviour
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Curricular Programmes
5. Communication
6. ICT
7. Physical Environment
8. DEIS Plan
9. SEN

In 2021-22 we conducted a review in May 2021 and consulted with all members of staff in relation to the to various developments in each of the areas. We added an additional area for Policy development.

The areas identified in our plan for development in 2020-21 were:

- DEIS Plan
- Student Voice
- Assessment for Learning
- Buildings/Refurbishment
- ICT upskilling
- Nurture

The areas identified for development in 2021-22 were:

- CPD
- Wellbeing Programme Development
- Subject Planning Work
- Special Class – Curriculum Development - L2LPs
- Parent Education Programme

2022-23

In the final year of this five year plan, we set out the areas in which we wanted to continue the work already done, ie, areas of ongoing focus and also areas in which we had wanted to focus but had to postpone due to Covid-19.

Areas of Ongoing Focus

1. DEIS Plan – Analysis of Attainment Data (AOR)
2. Student Voice progressing to Student Participation – Homework Policy Development (KDY)

3. Assessment for Learning – Formative Feedback and Reflection Time (DIRT) (RLN) (KDY)
4. ICT upskilling – new Digital Plan & development Mentor Programme, Digital Portfolios (EMY, CON)
5. Nurture – Continued training of staff, profiling and target setting for students (SHS)
6. Merici – L2 P2 training and targeting relevant students (LWH)

New Areas of Focus

6. CPD development
7. Wellbeing – Development of School Culture (AKN)
8. Subject Development Planning – HOD training, postholder coordinating plans (ABN)
9. Parent Education/parent partnership

This research along with improvements made in key areas including ICT and digital learning, the culture and wellbeing of all members of the community, the introduction of a Learning Code, new curricular subjects and a better system of communication have allowed processes of learning and assessment to be mapped out.

2.3 Rationale

In order for an effective process of learning and assessment to occur, conditions have to be conducive for both students and teachers to engage.

From 2018-2022, in the areas of Teaching and Learning we conducted several cycles of research on Formative assessment.

We see assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning in which both teacher and student participate in order to achieve the best outcomes for both.

Assessment is used in setting and correcting homework, classwork, projects, oral & aural work, practical examinations, classroom-based assessments, assessment tasks etc. This list is not exhaustive.

A key aspect of assessment is reflection on the part of student and teacher. Reflection is modelled by teachers and overtly taught to students through the process of assessment.

2.4 Why Assess?

- To monitor student's progress.
- To provide teachers with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning. This allows teachers to identify their next steps in progressing the student's learning and to adapt teaching and learning strategies as appropriate.
- To provide students and parents with information regarding students' progress.
- To establish baseline data in relation to student's attainment in certain subjects.
- To assess student's eligibility for additional support (AEN) and services.

- To assist in the identification of students who may need to be referred to an outside professional or agency for assessment or direct intervention.
- To provide students and parents with evidence that will inform what realistic pathways are available for students when they leave school.

2.3 Aims of Assessment

- To motivate students to engage in the learning process and associated target setting and take greater personal responsibility for their learning outcomes.
- To engage students in reflection on their own work with a view to self-improve
- To pursue academic excellence while providing for the wellbeing of the students.
- To facilitate and encourage a love of learning that will become a lifelong process.
- To encourage parents to take an active role in, and a shared responsibility for their children's education.
- To inform parents of how students can take practical steps to improve.

2.4 Forms of Assessment

The forms of assessment used in Cabinteely Community School aim to provide recommendations, clarifications and encouragement for all partners in the teaching-learning process.

2.4.1 Summative Assessment – Assessment of Learning

Summative Assessment: *“Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the students’ achievements and to determine whether, and to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality”. (NCCA)*

Summative assessment includes homework, class tests, formal house exams, state exams and practical exams. Summative assessment generally takes place after the learning has taken place and the information is usually transformed into marks or grades. It allows teachers to check student progress since the last test or exam. It also allows for a comparison with the performance of peers.

2.4.2 Formative Assessment – Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning:

“Assessment for Learning (AFL) means using evidence and dialogue to identify where pupils are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.”

AFL is implemented in the following ways:

Sharing learning intentions: Teachers share the learning intention with students at the beginning of class. It is referred to during the lesson and again at the end of the lesson. This helps to clarify what the student is supposed to learn and helps the students and teachers to determine the level to which the outcome has been achieved following the lesson.

Sharing the criteria for success with students: Teachers will provide students with details of what is expected in a piece of work. Samples may be provided. Students will be informed of what the piece of completed work should look like in order for them to gain maximum marks.

Comment only marking: Teachers engage in comment only marking during feedback on homework, project work, class tests etc. It may include what was done well, where to improve and how to do so.

Peer/ Self-Assessment: Teachers facilitate peer/ self-assessment based on a criteria for success.

Students are encouraged to reflect on areas completed well and areas for improvement.

Effective Questioning/ Tasks: Teachers implement Blooms Taxonomy when asking questions and setting tasks. Teachers are encouraged to promote higher order thinking in our students (top of pyramid) when doing this. This pyramid helps teachers to identify the next steps in learning.

Assessment for Learning is based on identified Learning Outcomes and Success Criteria. It can take the form of questions, peer and self-assessment and feedback. Information is shared with the learner. It aims to inform students on how to improve on their current academic performance. Information is available on the quality of the learning and formative learning looks forward to the next stage of learning

3. ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE

3.1 Summative Assessment in Practice in CCS

The school year comprises of three semesters of ten weeks, each of which is followed by an Assessment Week. This calendar is arranged to facilitate both formal and informal assessment. It allows for the signposting of weeks so that students are more aware of assessments and can organize their learning around it.

Class Tests

- Teachers regularly give class tests.
- Results of these class tests are recorded by teachers on the school Administration system, VS Ware and teachers use a tracking software which gathers all of the assessment data of each students and displays it across the student's time in the school (Athena Tracker).
- These results are communicated to parents at parent teacher meetings.

Levels

- First year students follow courses at common level in all subjects.
- Students will sit most subjects at common level under the new Junior Cycle course. The exceptions to this include Maths, Irish and English that are studied at Higher or Ordinary level.
- At Junior Cycle, as students enter second year, students are currently divided into Higher and Ordinary level classes in Maths and Irish where possible. In some incidences, where numbers do not allow for this, mixed ability classes are formed. English??
- At Leaving Cert level, as students enter fifth year, they are currently divided into Higher and Ordinary level classes in Maths and Irish where possible. Levels in other subjects are decided as the course progresses through 5th and 6th year
- These decisions are made in consultation with parents, guidance counsellors, Year heads, teachers, students etc.
- The Subject Level Change form must be completed for all movement between levels and classes. The decision to change levels is made in consultation with student, parent, subject teacher(s) and the year head.

Semester One Assessments

Semester One exams are scheduled for all year groups in Week 11. Features of these exams are:

- formal timetabled house exams
- common exams for all subjects within year groups
- provision is made of students eligible for special accommodations
- differentiation for students on the SEN Register
- exams are based on checklists and criteria for success
- teacher set exams using a formative feedback template (What Went Well/Even Better If) based on criteria for success
- when teachers give back exams they give student Dedication Reflection & Improvement Time to make changes to improve their work

Semester Two

For Week 11 in Semester Two, there is no formal exam for First, Second, Transition and Fifth Years. Instead, the focus is on a formative assessment approach. Each subject department sets out assessment schedules for their subjects. In Junior Cycle, the CBA will feature as a large part of the assessment. Other aspects may include class tests, project work, portfolios, practical, oral and aural exams and student participation.

Mock Examinations for Third and Sixth years

Mock exams take place in the final two weeks of Semester Two for 3rd and 6th Years. Features of these exams are:

- Mock exams are set externally.
- Mock exams are corrected internally.
- These exams generally follow the format of the Junior/ Leaving Certificate and marking schemes are made available to teachers.
- Students benefit from time management and answering technique from mock exams.

Semester 3 Assessments

House exams are scheduled in the final two weeks in May for First, Second and Fifth Years. Transition Years do house exams in the core subjects and undergo assessment by means of portfolio in other subjects which are presented at graduation evening in the final weeks of Semester Three.

Third and Sixth Years do block classes while house exams are going. Students have a say in what areas of the curriculum are studied in these classes to support their study for state exams which begin on the first Wednesday in June.

3.2 Formative Assessment Practice in Cabinteely Community School – A Timeline

Formative Assessment initiatives have run in Cabinteely CS since 2018. An overview of these initiatives is provided below;

2018-2019 English Dept Initiative using What Went Well/Even Better If templates to focus on success criteria for exams/pieces of work. The templates were designed by teachers to signpost ways in which students could do better. Students then filled the feedback into grids in their own copies and used them going into the next assessment. This initiative was shared at the end of the year with the whole staff.

2019-2020 The newly formed Learning Team designed a piece of Formative Feedback Research using Ketso Kit in which three four main areas were examined with a focus group of students and teachers. These were: Comment Only Marking, the impact of comment only marking on student learning and the quality of teacher written feedback.

General survey results at the start of the research showed that:

- Overall, students found the experience of receiving comment only marking more positive than negative, despite over half missing getting grades.
- Students liked that comment only marking showed them “where to improve and what they went wrong”
- Only 17% of students said that grade only marking made them feel good.
- 67% said that comment only marking helped them with class & homework
- Students were unsure if comment only feedback impacted on their learning overall

A focus group undertook to do a Ketso Kit cycle research and the results indicated that teacher written feedback needed to:

- Be more specific
- Comments should be more sensitive to students
- It should happen more frequently
- Students should be given more time to improve the work after the teacher gives it back

Feedback from teachers indicated the following trends:

- a reluctance to change how feedback was given
- a need for training to effectively give feedback
- grades were easier to give than written feedback

All teachers surveyed had given comment only marking in the semester exams and their feedback indicated the following

- their experience of so doing scored 3.5 out of 5 for a positive experience
- Most indicated that they would continue to incorporate this type of feedback to students in their work
- need for a template for the comments

In relation to the feedback itself, teachers made the following remarks:

- Gives students a specific focus for next time
- Allows time for student reflection
- More of a focus/balance on positive comments
- Students able to measure against success criteria

The biggest drawback to giving the feedback was time.

From this research, it was decided that we needed to investigate how to empower teachers to create feedback grids and to find a less time-consuming way to do this.

2020-21 Formative Feedback Cycle of Research on Teacher Collaboration in a process of written formative feedback. This piece of research was done during Covid-19 when limited student participation was possible. Instead the focus on was on how teachers could collaborate to better understand formative feedback, to work together to produce quality templates and to share experiences on how effectively the process worked in term of the how students worked with the feedback to improve their work.

Report on Formative Feedback Initiative

Using What Went Well/Even Better If... Rubrics

The study sought to investigate the collaboration of teacher participants in a formative feedback process in order to bring forward student learning in the context of a DEIS school. It was a follow up from the work that had been started in the English Department using rubrics for Semester 1 exams for all subjects.

This study was conducted by a group of six teachers. Each teacher invited two students from a Second Year classes to participate in their normal class/homework assignments. The students' role was to allow their work to be shared with the group to see the impact of the feedback and of their response to the feedback.

Challenges to Feedback

The teachers met as a group initially and discussed their understanding of formative feedback and of how a process of feedback might be instigated through a focused intervention.

The Collaboration

The starting point was for teachers to form pairs and to collaborate in finding a shared understanding of formative feedback as a process, consisting of Learning Objective, Success Criteria and Formative Feedback. The teachers consulted on the design of the www/ebi rubric for their first assignment and rolled it out to the whole class. Each teacher then reflected on the effectiveness of the criteria for success which formed the basis for the www/ebi rubric and on whether the feedback succeeded in getting students to engage and to adjust their work to make it better.

Based on the success of student response and consultation with their partners, teachers designed the next rubric for the second and third assignments.

Findings

The themes which emerged from the study as impacting most on the success of a formative feedback process in our school were;

1. Teacher Understanding of Feedback as a process
2. Feedback as a Dialogue with students
3. Effective collaboration between teachers
4. **Teacher Understanding**

Feedback Form 4 Bar Melody in 4

1. Draw out the scale & number your notes

Success Criteria: ✔ or ✘

Did I number my notes 1 - 8?	
Did I draw the treble clef and key signature?	

2. Compose a 4 bar rhythm in 4

Success Criteria: ✔ or ✘

Did I have 4 beats in every bar?	
Did I finish on a longer note? (♩ or ♪)	
Did I include a dotted crotchet quaver? (♩. ♪ = 2 beats)	

3. Compose a melody based on your scale and 4 bar rhythm

Success Criteria: ✔ or ✘

Did I begin and end on the keynote?	
Is my stem direction correct?	
Did I include a phrase mark?	
Did I include the treble clef, key and time signature?	
Did I only use STEP MOVEMENT?	
If I started the melody on the <u>low</u> keynote did I finish on the high keynote?	
I didn't repeat too many notes	
Did I have a range of at least an 8ve?	

Did I check my homework against the success criteria?
Write the answer underneath your homework.

What Went Well:	Even Better If:

If you got a ✘ in the success criteria, find it in your homework, circle the problem and send me a picture.

The study revealed the level of teachers' knowledge about and confidence in providing feedback directly correlated with the extent they used feedback with students. The key findings in relation to teachers' understanding were that some teachers felt that formative feedback was better suited to some subjects than others and that the language of feedback was too complicated for students. Teachers also felt that the process of feedback was time consuming and that effective collaboration with colleagues required both time and support.

Dialogue with Students

It emerged from the study that student relationships with teachers are key to dialogue.

As teachers engaged more in dialogue with students and set high expectations in terms of success criteria and feedback, clear improvement in students' work and increased confidence followed. Although the online nature of the assignments limited teacher student interactions, teachers began to see the potential gains for using a system of feedback in their classrooms beyond Covid-19.

Effective Collaboration between Teachers

Key findings from the study indicate that collaboration is time consuming. Teachers agreed on the need for teachers to access time and support in order for proficiency in formative assessment to develop. Initially, the investment of time in the research was an unrealistic long-term option for most teachers, but by the end of the study there was an awareness of its overall benefits. Teachers' focus shifted to how the process could work in their departments efficiently and effectively.

It is clear from the data that the rigorous cycles of self-reflection, collaboration with colleagues and dialogue with students caused teachers to rethink what they knew about feedback, to re-assess how they applied the feedback process in their own practices and to consider how this knowledge could be used on a wider scale. Findings indicate that all teachers affirmed that the process had provided a collaborative framework for their deeper engagement with the complexity of feedback.

Conclusion

On a practical level, the cycles of research showed that by overtly teaching success criteria to students before providing [www/ebi](#) rubrics, feedback becomes meaningful to students. Teachers also identified the need to give time for the provision of feedback in class so that errors are understood by students and are less likely to reoccur.

It emerged that while individual teachers were engaging in effective feedback provision before the initiative, the extent and consistency varied greatly. It pointed to a need for a comprehensive school policy on assessment, which would ensure that teachers are given the opportunity, support and the time to collaborate with each other in the process of assessment.

Evidence pointed to the fact that well designed feedback differentiates for all ability levels and brings the students' learning forward from where it is to where it needs to be. by overtly teaching success criteria to students before providing [www/ebi](#) rubrics,

Finally, the data gathered during the intervention, suggested that by setting high expectations of student ability to engage in feedback and by refusing to allow the social issues of our context or the absence of pressure to earn grades in high stakes exams to impact these expectations, teachers can address the inequity that exists between students in DEIS and non-DEIS schools.

2021-2022 Formative Feedback Initiative with students (Student Learning Team)

2022-2023 Formation of a Student Learning Team and the rollout of Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time.

https://ncca.ie/media/1925/assessment-booklet-3_en.pdf

3.3 Transition Year Assessments

TY students are assessed on a credit system. Methods of assessments vary across subjects and can include project work, presentations, written exams amongst others. Each student must compile a portfolio. The portfolio is a summary of their year and must include pieces of work, photographs and reviews of out-of-class experiences. This portfolio is awarded credits. Transition Year Students are also interviewed towards the end of the Year as part of their assessment.

Their Transition Year result is awarded as follows: Distinction Merit Pass Fail

4. Assessments for New Students

4.1 Incoming 1st Year Students

Students who have enrolled with the school sit an assessment test the month of January preceding entry to First Year.

They sit the Cognitive Abilities Test 4 which assesses students ability across four areas which include:

- Verbal Battery Test.
- Quantitative Battery Test
- Non-verbal Battery Test.
-

When the results become available the SEN Coordinator and Guidance Counsellor meet with the new year head for First Year and organize visits to the primary schools of the incoming cohort.

Parent receive a summary report of the results which indicate areas of strength for students in order to help with subject option decisions in the month of March preceding entry to First Year.

Students with particular needs are identified and meetings are organized with SEN teachers and 6th Class teachers of these students.

Mixed ability classes are organized prior to the Welcome Evening for students and parents in the month of May preceding entry to First Year.

5. Homework and Study

5.1 Why Homework is Important

Homework forms an integral part of the learning experience for each student in Cabinteely Community School. Careful cooperation between students, teachers, tutors, Year heads and Parents/Guardians is essential. To reach their full potential, students must develop a regular study and homework routine from the very beginning of first year. The range of homework activities may include written exercises, learning work, reading, research, oral work, revision exercises, preparation, projects, etc... In CCS, we try to give choice in assignments

5.2 Homework serves several functions which include:

- It consolidates and reinforces learning and understanding on tasks/ topics completed in the classroom.
- It encourages students to develop the skills, confidence, self-discipline, and motivation needed to study at home.
- It extends learning completed in the classroom e.g., research.
- It keeps parents informed on the work being completed by their child at school.
- It allows teachers to understand how well students have grasped new concepts.
- It allows the teacher and students to identify the next steps in their learning.

5.3 Homework Guidelines

Students are expected to complete homework to the best of their ability and on time. Students who miss class for school activities are expected to catch up on homework by contacting a classmate and completing the work on time. Students are discouraged to have part time jobs during the school terms.

- Students should record all pieces of homework carefully in their journal during each class.
- Students should complete homework on the night they receive it.
- Students are encouraged to check with teachers how long a piece of homework should take in each subject.
- Students should follow the timing guidelines outlined below and refer the matter to their Class Teacher should these times become unrealistic, causing underperformance and stress to students.
- Recommended time for homework/study at night are as follows for each year group:
 - 1st Years – 1 hour per night
 - 2nd Years – 1-1.5 hours per night
 - 3rd Years – 2 hours per night
 - Transition Year – Homework should be given in core subjects as normal
 - 5th Year – 2-2.5 hours per night
 - 6th Year – 2.5-3 hours per night

5.4 After School Supervised Study

Supervised study is made available for 3rd, 5th and 6th year students on a paid basis. Supervised study is available Monday to Friday for two hours after school. It is a quiet space supervised by a teacher. It allows our students to complete homework and study in a focused way. It is expected that students would complete any unfinished work at home that evening. It is important that parents monitor the progress made at supervised study and at home regarding homework and study.

6. Reporting on Assessment

6.1 Reports for Students

End of semester reports are completed by all teachers three times a year following assessments in each semester for First, Second, Transition and Fifth Years.

Third and Sixth Year students get a report following the house exam in Semester One and they also get a report based on their Mock exams for Semester Two.

7. ASSESSMENT AND SEN

Standardised Testing

- First Year
- All students complete the Group Reading Test and a standardised spelling test
- Some students may receive further testing carried out by the Learning Support Department

Second Year

- All students sit a standardised test (e.g Drumcondra Online Test) of Reading and Maths in May.

Third Year

- The Learning Support Department carry out Standardised Testing of students who may require RACE.
- All Third Year Students do CAT 4

Fifth and Sixth Year

The Learning Support Department Continue to carry out standardised testing of SEN and/or students who may require RACE.

Special Educational Needs

- Students with Special Educational needs may be facilitated with differentiated modes of assessment as appropriate.
- SEN students who meet the criteria for Reasonable Accommodations are facilitated in Leaving Cert and Junior Cycle Mock Examinations e.g access to a reader, use of a laptop, etc.
- As far as possible, SEN students are given opportunities to avail of Reasonable Accommodations in House Exams.

Assessment and the DEIS Plan

OUR DEIS PLAN 2022-23

We are a DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) School which means that we participate in the national programme aimed at addressing the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities.

As such, the cornerstone of our planning and development is our DEIS Plan. The seven pillars of DEIS represent the priorities we have in planning for improvement. These pillars are; Retention, Attendance, Literacy, Numeracy, Attainment, Progression and Partnership with Parents/Guardians and the Community.

The DEIS Action plan operates in the same way as the School Self Evaluation model in non- DEIS schools. The process is the same. It is based on targets described in detail in *Looking at our Schools 2016 and 2022*.

In 2021-22, we implemented a new DEIS Plan focussed on attendance and attainment. The following are excerpts from the plan.

These are a summary of our strengths with regards to the DEIS Pillars

- All staff have been put into a pillar group and have delivered an information session to their student/staff groups in their pillar.
- Each pillar has a DEIS Leader.
- The DEIS Leaders have had two meetings to come up with a plan to deliver the DEIS information in an hour to their class groups.
- We have a DEIS Team in place, which has met once and will meet several times to draft the DEIS Plan.
- We have the relevant baseline data which needs to be analysed.
- We had some success with our targets previously which we hope to build on.
- DEIS Coordinator appointed.

This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further

- Setting goals through LAOS 2016 standards of effective and highly effective practice.
- Using the SSE method of evaluating what is working well and how we can improve through cycles of action research.
- Include both students and staff in this process through a house system.

Looking at Our Schools 2016

DIMENSION: TEACHING AND LEARNING	DIMENSION: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
DOMAIN 2: Learner Experiences	DOMAIN 2: Leading Teaching & Learning
STANDARDS	
Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning	Foster teacher professional development which that enriches teachers' and students' learning
STATEMENTS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	
<p>Students assess their progress realistically and can describe their strengths and areas for development as learners.</p> <p>They have a sense of ownership of their work, take pride in it, and take responsibility for improving it.</p> <p>They reflect on their behaviour and attitude to learning, and are able to set meaningful personal goals as a result of their reflection.</p> <p>Where the school curriculum provides opportunities to do so, students negotiate their learning thereby increasing their autonomy and effectiveness as learners.</p> <p>Students take responsibility for their own learning, and use both the learning resources provided to them, and those that they source themselves, to develop their skills and extend their knowledge.</p>	<p>Those in leadership and management roles support and promote teachers' continuing professional development in a range of areas, to support high-quality teaching.</p> <p>The principal and deputy principal ensure that professional development is firmly based on action research and is adapted to the identified needs of the school. They maximise opportunities to develop teachers' capacity and competence to improve teaching and learning.</p> <p>The principal and deputy principal support and encourage the active participation of teachers in professional networks to improve student learning.</p>

DEIS Targets and Measures

The DEIS Plan sets out clear targets for improvement under each pillar and sets of measures to address those targets.

1. Pillar 1: Attainment

The targets for academic attainment include a reduction in students getting lower grades in Junior and Senior Cycle Maths, in Modern Foreign Languages and an increase in LCA grades over three years.

The measures in place to address these targets included Formative Assessment Initiative, After school study, LCA task scaffolding such as the preparation and correction of draft key assignments and tasks and the use of academic tracking to analyse student progress.

Attainment		Measures
	Aims	
Decrease	Decrease number of students getting D or less in JC maths from 52% to 50% in year 1 , then 48% in year 2 then 46% in year 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFL compulsory for 1st years in 2019/2020 • Formative Feedback initiative • Teacher mentoring/meitheal • Information evening with parents • Co-Teaching for Maths/Eng/options • After school study • Using Athena and academic trackers • Learning Code: Merits/postcards/certificates • Schedule of measures for LCA tasks to be issued.
Decrease	Decrease number of students getting D or less in JC languages 33% to 31% in year 1, 29% in year 2 and 27% by end of year 3.	
Decrease	Decrease number of students getting H/O6 or less in LC maths from 40% to 38% in year 1, 36% in year 2 and 34% by end of year 3	
Decrease	Decrease number of students getting H/O6 or less in LC languages from 54% to 52% in year 1, 50% in year 2 and 48% by end of year 3.	
Increase	Increase average LCA grades by 1% overall per year over 3 years from	

2. Pillar 2 - Attendance

Attendance

Aims

Reduce	Reduce ABS (unexplained absences) in senior cycle from 15% to 14% in year 1, 13% in year 2, 12% in year 3
Reduce	Reduce TY lates from 8.7% to 8% by year 1, then 7% year 2, then 6% year 3
Reduce	Reduce ABS in JC from 8% to 6% in year 1, then 4% in year 2, and 2% in year 3

Measures

- Teachers take roll in the first 10 minutes of lesson. Notify YH & office.
- Formative feedback
- Differentiation - SEN, SSF, Athena
- CTs ring home if a student is absent for 3 days
- New app
- Refresh how to take rolls on VShare at start of year
- School Completion
- Class/Year trips/activities
- HSCL home visits
- Care Team
- Mission Statement & Ethos development
- Communication with parents
- Merits/postcards/certificates/Attendance certs/rewards (Prize Day) - Interclass competition with rewards: Encourages students to be in and on time as merits are added to class total
- Extra-curricular activities (COVID)
- Offering L2LP (in 2021)/LCA/TY as well as JC/LCE
- Nurture Classroom

Literacy

Aims

Decrease number of students	getting D or less in JC languages from 33% to 31% in year 1, 29% in year 2 and 27% by end of year 3.
Decrease number of students	getting H/O6 or less in LC languages from 54% to 52% in year 1, 50% in year 2 and 48% by end of year 3.
Increase how comfortable	JC students are with talking out loud in class from 2.53 by 0.25 each year over 3 years.
Increase how comfortable	LC students are with talking out loud in class from 2.85 by 0.25 each year over 3 years

Measures

- MLF compulsory for all 1st years since 2019/2020
- CBAs for all subjects from 2019/2020 intake
- TY presentations
- Formative Feedback initiative
- Comment only marking for 1st to 5th year in semester 1 house exams.
- Differentiation (SEN reg., CAT4, Athena, AFL)
- Writing competition
- Word of the Week

Numeracy

1. Decrease number of students getting D or less in JC maths from 52% to 50% in year 1, then 48% in year 2 then 46% in year 3.
 - Formative Feedback initiative
 - Comment only marking for 1st to 5th year in semester 1 house exams.
2. Improve SC confidence in creating digital content from 3.27 by 0.25 each year over 3 years
 - Differentiation (SEN reg., CAT4, Athena, AFL)
 - Introduction of Microsoft Office in 2020 - Student/staff/parent training sessions
3. Improve JC confidence in Creating digital content from 3.41 by 0.25 each year over 3 years
 - Assignments/HW given online
 - CBAs in all JC subjects from 19/20 intake

Transitions

1. Increase how comfortable students are with transition from primary to first year from 53% to 55% in year 1, 57% in year 2, 57% in year 3
 - YH: 1st Year YH to be appointed in January and contact primary schools, meet with students, attend induction days, CAT4 tests, SEN dept. To give tours to targeted students, 4th/5th class subject taster visits
2. Increase how comfortable students are in transition from students in 3rd/TY to LCA
 - i. Knew enough about LCA - increase knowledge about LCA from 50% to 80% over 3 years
 - ii. Maintain the number of students who think they made the correct choice at 87%
 - iii. Reduce the number of students receiving O/F7 - O/F8 in Eng, Irish from 13.8% to 11% in year 1, 9% in year 2 & 7% in year 3
 - 3rd/TY into LCA: Information evenings for parents, teacher presentations about subjects, standardised test scores in 3rd year (CAT4), Guidance for possible career progression, current LCA pupils to speak to 3rd/TY groups.

Retention

Reduce ABS	in JC from 7% to 6% by year 1, then to 4% in year 2, then 2% in year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers take roll in the first 10 minutes of lesson CTs ring home if a student is absent for 3 days Ensure rolls are taken within 1st 10 minutes of class School Completion Class/Year trips/activities HSCL home visits Care Team Mission statement & Ethos development Communication with parents Merits/postcards/certificates - Interclass competition with rewards: Encourages students to be in and on time as merits are added to class total Extra-curricular activities (COVID) Offering L2LP (in 2021)/LCA/TY as well as JC/LCE Attendance certs/rewards (Prize Day) Nurture Room
Increase average	JC retention rate over 3 years from 82% in year 1 to 84% in year 2 to 86% in year 3	
Increase average	SC retention rate over 3 years from 87% to 89% in year 1, 91% in year 2, 93% in year 3	

Learning and our Strategic Plan

1. Our Vision/Strategic Plan 2018-2023

Background

In 2018, we created the framework for a school improvement plan which consisted of eight areas of development. Each year we have reviewed the plan. The original eight areas became nine in 2019 when we made SEN a separate area of development based on the needs of the students.

These areas were:

1. Mission Statement, Ethos & Wellbeing
2. Positive Behaviour
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Curricular Programmes
5. Communication
6. ICT
7. Physical Environment
8. DEIS Plan
9. SEN

In 2021-22 we conducted a review in May and consulted with all members of staff in relation to the various developments in each of the areas. made in each of ten areas identified in our Strategic Plan. We decided to add an additional area for Policy development.

The areas identified in our plan for development in 2020-21 were:

- DEIS Plan
- Student Voice
- Assessment for Learning
- Buildings/Refurbishment
- ICT upskilling
- Nurture

The areas identified for development in 2021-22 were:

- CPD
- Wellbeing Programme Development
- Subject Planning Work
- Special Class – Curriculum Development - L2LPs
- Parent Education Programme

2022-23

Ongoing focus

1. DEIS Plan – Analysis of Attainment Data (AOR)
2. Student Voice progressing to Student Participation – Homework Policy Development (KDY)
3. Assessment for Learning – Formative Feedback and Reflection Time (DIRT) (RLN) (KDY)
4. ICT upskilling – new Digital Plan & development Mentor Programme, Digital Portfolios (EMY, CON)
5. Nurture – Continued training of staff, profiling and target setting for students (SHS)
6. Merici – L2 P2 training and targeting relevant students (LWH)

New Focus

6. CPD Register for staff
7. Wellbeing – Development of School Culture of the school through Core Behaviours based on Core Values (AKN)
8. Subject Development Planning – HOD training, postholder coordinating plans (ABN)
9. Parent Education/parent partnership

ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

School Management Team should:

- Facilitate meetings for departments or teams of teachers to discuss assessment/recording/reporting.
- Look at early predictions of final Junior Certificate/Leaving Certificate grades and facilitate mentoring of individual pupils to find ways to improve their performance.
- Analyse and evaluate test/exam results and discuss implications of findings with departments with respect to future developments in teaching and assessment.
- Support, monitor and evaluate assessment/recording/reporting within the school.

Subject Teachers should:

- Ensure that all students are actively involved in their learning and in the self-assessment of their progress.
- Ensure that all students take an active role in setting their own targets.
- Share learning objectives and success criteria with students.
- Provide students with regular formative feedback on the standard of their work, in line with agreed marking and assessment procedures.
- Use assessment data to inform lesson planning, including differentiated activities to meet the identified needs of individual students.
- Complete reports on students' progress.

Students should:

- Take responsibility for their own learning through reflection on their work, feedback given and self-assessment.
- Work towards achieving agreed target levels/grades.

Parents should:

Support and encourage their child's learning by working in partnership with the school, e.g. attending parent/teacher meetings, monitoring homework, checking their child's Homework Journal and VS WARE account.

Review Procedure

This Assessment Policy will be reviewed annually by the Assessment Team in consultation with teaching staff and all other relevant partners for ratification by the Board of Management and Trustees

- During their time in school all pupils will be assessed on an ongoing formal and informal basis.

- Assessment results will be readily available to parents and students via the school app.
- Assessment in particular subjects will be in accordance with assessment criteria of subject requirements.
- All teachers will keep a record of pupil's attendance, class tests, homework and end of term tests in their Teacher's Roll Book.