



*St. Kevin's National School
Pearse Street
Sallynoggin
Co. Dublin*

School Self-Improvement Plan

Evaluation period: Improvement Plan from September 2018

School self-evaluation

Summary school improvement plan

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

As part of our ongoing work in the school, we conducted a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning this year. We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the year. We evaluated;

- i. Literacy (new language curriculum, oral language, reading and writing)*
- ii. Gaeilge (new language curriculum, oral language, reading and writing)*
- iii. Numeracy*
- iv. Other curriculum areas – Science (fourth year), PE (fourth year) Visual Arts, SPHE (new programme – did not achieve this objective last year) and Digital Framework Pla*
- v. Attendance*
- vi. Area Partnerships*

For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our School Self-Evaluation Report which is available to you in our school office or on our school website.

This school improvement plan sets out the actions that we will undertake in the school over this year and the next three years. The main purpose of these actions is to improve our pupils' learning, with particular respect to literacy and numeracy.

2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

2.1 Our school has *strengths* in the following areas:

Strengths

- i. There is continued evidence of outstanding teaching and learning in this DEIS band 1 urban primary school – the professionalism of each teacher remains, evident, quantitatively, in test scores and, qualitatively, in the breadth of methodologies and structure of each lesson. The climate and ethos was noted as a particular strength by our visiting inspector throughout the year and the professional development of teachers has continued in the last year, ensuring the commendable evidence of teaching and learning remains consistent alongside the introduction of new curricula.*
- ii. These strengths were noted during an incidental inspection, on Thursday 10th May 2018, from Inspector Edel Corcoran. Three teachers were observed, including the subjects of English, Maths, SÉSE, SPHE, PE and Gaeilge. She also spoke to me in the office and examined our Child Protection documentation.
The inspector was very happy with the school noting;*
 - a) Pupils are enjoying learning, pupils are content and comfortable and open in their interactions with the teachers and staff*
 - b) Pupils are motivated and want to please teachers. Pupils are supported and engaged and stay on task,*
 - c) There are respectful interactions between the teachers and pupils, pupils and SNA's and between all members of staff.*
 - d) There is a lovely emphasis on creativity throughout the school, which is to be commended.*

- e) *The subject knowledge of teachers is also to be commended as is the planning, this is particularly evident with respect to writing and genres – recount etc.*
- f) *Planning of teachers links well to DEIS plans and Whole School Plans*
- g) *The range of teaching methodologies employed is admirable, including group work and pair work and teachers are well prepared*
- h) *The classrooms are organised with good displays*
- iii. *There is also a high degree of pastoral care among all members of staff for the well-being of each pupil, encouraging learning and attendance, participation in school activities and excellent behaviour and conduct. All relationships are respectful. This cannot be underestimated in a DEIS Band 1 urban primary school (where many pupils endure significant and daily challenges). It is a pertinent strength as we aspire to mould pupils that are empathetic, law-abiding and culturally aware as much as pupils that are literate and numerate.*
- iv. *There continues to be a high degree of parental involvement and engagement with area partnerships, to the edification of both teaching and learning in the school community. The H.S.C.L. teacher, teachers, sna's and ancillary staff are to be commended for this. This will continue this year with additional classes and clubs – please see the Self Evaluation Report and the DEIS Action Plan for Parental Involvement for further details.*
- v. *St. Kevin's has improved its approach to Science in the following six ways, and will continue for a fourth consecutive year:*
 - a) *Each class has undertaken minimum of 5 'hands-on' science investigations, each from one of the four strands; Living Things, Energy and Forces, Materials and Environmental Awareness and Care. We have also invited a science speaker to school and have participated in science events or projects run by other organisations.*
 - b) *We have encouraged pupils to use technology as part of their school and science work. By technology we mean Information Communications Technologies [ICT]. This included evidence of the students developing 'photostories', researching projects and using technology to record and analyse data collected e.g. a spreadsheet or graph and evidence of the children developing a PowerPoint presentation. This is also linked to our Green School presentations and achievements.*
 - c) *We have encouraged the pupils to use their maths skills as part of their science work, e.g. measuring distances, capacity, weight, recording and analysing data. Using maths operations; ratio, percentages, averages. We also developed a number of maths trails around the school. We encouraged the older classes to undertake maths trails with younger classes.*
- vi. *Like Science, we have also improved and consolidated our instruction of the Physical Education curriculum, promoting Physical Literacy in our school, we will continue this for a fourth consecutive year, Physical Literacy is a fundamental and valuable human capability that can be described as a disposition acquired by pupils encompassing the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding that establishes purposeful physical pursuits as an integral part of their lifestyle. Each pupil engages with Zuu Chimps once a week, There is also weekly 1) Gaelic coaching with Cuala, 2) weekly football coaching with Joseph's F.C., and Rory O' Hare from the FAI, 3) weekly P.E. classes, 4) weekly rugby coaching with Leinster Rugby and 5) dedicated swimming lessons for a period of twelve weeks, along with 6) weekly dance classes for each pupil.*
The school has increased its' participation in national Gaelic and soccer competitions and participates in local blitzes such as basketball, futsal and 'Cuala All-Stars'. In addition, there are extra-curricular classes organised for pupils including 1) basketball,

2) volleyball, 3) badminton, 4) sailing, 5) golf and 6) football, each for a period of six weeks. In addition, pupils, exclusive to the school, may avail of 7) Hula-Hoop classes and 8) Irish Dancing classes as an extra-curricular activity. 9) Pupils will also commence the 'daily mile' this year and join the 10) Athletics Club which will also offer pupils the opportunity to compete in the Santry Games.

2.2 Our school has decided to prioritise the following areas of development:

Areas for development

- i. Continue to implement throughout all classes a progressive plan that supports the introduction of the language curriculum – from Junior Infants to Second Class. The oral language, reading and writing strands will be fully implemented and consolidated at this level (in both the English and Gaeilge curricula). These three language strands will continue from Junior Infants to Second Class alongside the First Steps Writing programme which will continue in the senior classes. Teachers will receive CPD with respect to the writing strand. All classes are ascribed a selection of class novels and supporting materials. Reading Recovery will also be continued this year to support pupils where apposite.
- ii. In order to continue to progress our numeracy practice, ten minutes of oral maths prefacing each numeracy lesson will continue, endorsing the development of lateral thinking and consistency in language where appropriate. There will also be an emphasis on the learning of tables, using a range of methodologies (See DEIS Action Plan). There will be a whole school approach to maths operations and maths language. Both the instruction of tables and practical problems will be supplemented by 'Snackbox', 'Brainbox', Planet Maths, Maths Challenge, Dropbox Tables Resources, IWB activities and Tables games.
- iii. We will consolidate and progress the teaching and learning of Science for a fourth consecutive year, in the academic year 2018/2019. We will continue to operate a whole school approach to engaging with science, endeavouring to generate an interest in investigation amongst children, and assist each other as a staff to apply the DPSPM framework of inquiry based science teaching and learning. We will deliver the science curriculum in a cross curricular manner, concurrent to the attainment of curriculum objectives. This shall continue to build upon the work achieved last year and endeavour to achieve a fourth DPSPM Plaque of Excellence.
- iv. We will continue to progress Physical Education in our school including the activities above and the introduction of the 'daily mile'.
- v. 'We have already established that the whole process of painting is . . . the expression of the creative impulse . . . this is attested to by the natural ease with which the child seems to create the essential forms which are constantly present in all art. To deny the child that experience would be to thwart a means of speech and communication as instinctive as speech itself. Once included in our school curriculum we must however, concern ourselves with the objectives of this activity . . . their contribution to the child in their immediate sense, as an exercise of expression during his school life' (Rothko, [1941, Section Draft, 'A comparative analysis'] Writings on Art. 2006, p.25) We shall continue to endorse, support and develop 'the emphasis on creativity' commended by the district inspector Edel Corcoran in May 2018. Each class is

- committed to weekly art lessons and displays of the pupils' work in the classrooms, communal areas, entrance area (annual sixth class project), school corridors and hall.
- vi. We will begin to work on SPHE – particularly with respect to the new Stay Safe Programme as we did not achieve this goal last year – other than heavily promote the appropriate use of technology and social media – through our tv appearances (Sixth Class in both September and January), in-class seminars with Cyber-Safe Ireland and the appropriate management of incidents among the pupils.
- vii. We will integrate technology into the student experience and foster an environment of support and innovation in learning. School leadership will provide resources and cultivate a supportive and collaborative teaching and learning environment for integrating technology as a meaningful and effective part of the educational process. Students will leave our school as active, engaged and productive users of technology as a tool for learning and understand the impact of those technologies on society. With respect to the dimension of Teaching and Learning, we will chose the domain of learner outcomes and aspire to the first two standards; namely that students enjoy their learning are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners, and that students have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand themselves and their relationships.
- viii. The target for 2016/2017 was to increase the attendance rate and maintain an attendance rate at this increase, ideally at 93.5%. We did not succeed. The attendance for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 is reported at 89%. However, further analysis indicates that while attendance is at 93% for the months of September and October, it falls to an average of 89% in December, February, March, April, May and June. These months will be targeted specifically, to endeavour to maintain the attendance rate of 93% evident at the beginning of the academic year. Pupils who have missed more than 20 days in the preceding academic year will also be purposely targeted (59 pupils have missed 20 days or more).

2.3 Our school has set the following **targets for improvement** which are related to pupils' achievement and has identified the following **actions** which will help in achieving those targets over this year and the next three years.

Please see our DEIS Action Plans (available to you upon request).