



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

School Self-Improvement Plan

Evaluation period: Improvement Plan from September 2019

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 – Active School Status, Science, SPHE, Digital Framework*
- 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, SESE, 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, SNAs 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. *In conference with members of staff, we consolidated Science for the academic year 2018/2019, for the fourth consecutive academic year, as one other curriculum area, to allow it become completely embedded in teaching and learning in the school. We operated a whole school approach to engaging with science and maths, and continued to generate an interest in investigation amongst children. We assisted each other as a staff to apply the DPSSM framework of inquiry based science teaching and learning and delivered the science curriculum in a cross curricular manner, concurrent to the attainment of curriculum objectives. We have been successful in this endeavour and have now achieved three Discover Primary Science STEM Plaques of Excellence.*
- vi. *Like Science, we have continued to improve and consolidate our instruction of the Physical Education curriculum, promoting Physical Literacy in our school. 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. We have a structured timetable and the introduction of additional activities has ensured all pupils receive requisite time in this subject (weekly Gaelic coaching, weekly P.E. classes, weekly rugby coaching, weekly swimming lessons, weekly dance classes, increased participation in national Gaelic and soccer competitions, basketball, futsal and 'Cuala All-Stars' blitzes, extra-curricular classes for basketball, volleyball, badminton, sailing, golf and football have all been introduced and enhanced). Furthermore, in the academic year 2018/2019 we introduced the 'Daily Mile', and each pupil, from First Class to Sixth Class, jogged or walked a mile each day from Monday to Thursday, following the perimeter of both the junior and senior yard. This occurred before 'small-break' each day. We will continue this in the academic year 2019/2020.*

- vii. *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic, personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others. In conference with members of staff, we reviewed our SPHE programme in the 2018/2019 academic year. Through this policy and subsequently through RSE, we wished to assist children to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. Our ethos means that we value respect, tolerance and openness through the lived experience of the children and school community. As a staff we also acknowledge that parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their involvement was and will be encouraged as much as possible. SPHE and RSE are key components in supporting our school and children to develop into healthy young adults. We also reviewed our timetable for the Stay Safe programme, within our SPHE policy. Please see our SPHE policy for further details. We will continue this in the academic year 2019/2020.*
- viii. *We undertook a digital learning evaluation in our school during the period January 2019 to May 2019. A Focus group of teachers was established to work on developing our digital learning plan and an attitudinal survey was carried out to elicit the views of students on their use of digital technologies in the classroom, their access to internet at home and to reflect on their digital learning experiences.*
- a) *With respect to the Standard Teaching and Learning, and the Domain Learner Outcomes, we focused on i) using appropriate digital technologies to foster active engagement in attaining appropriate learning outcomes and ii) encouraged positive attitude towards the use of digital technologies and are aware of possible risks and limitations.*
- b) *With respect to the Standard Leading Leadership and Management, and the Domain Leading Teaching and Learning, we i) promoted a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment, In addition, ii) the principal and other leaders in the school encouraged teachers to use digital technologies to enhance their learning, teaching and assessment practices, and to share their practice.*
- c) *Both of these Standards will be carried forward in the new academic year 2019/2020 to further our use of digital technologies to enhance our teaching and the learning of our pupils.*
- ix. *The learning environment continues to be conducive to learning, created through attractive and stimulating classrooms (a number recently painted and all classrooms have been re-carpeted between March 2019 and July 2019) and the pupils' engagement in learning remains very positive. There is a very positive code of conduct, behaviour and discipline, effectively implemented by each member of staff. In addition there are very high standards of behaviour and levels of motivation among pupils. Incidents of a serious nature are singular and atypical. This is a consequence of teachers that are well prepared and deliver well-structured, objectives-based lessons and employ, where appropriate, a team teaching approach and use of resources. All teachers are empathetic and favour a clear, instructive approach, supported by more focused, responsive teaching once the lesson objective is imparted. Finally, the ongoing analysis of assessment data will guide the development of whole-school targets across the curriculum.*

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 implementation of the new Language Curriculum. The school will follow an annual plan, introducing the new elements of the language curriculum in both English and Irish in all classes. The new language curriculum will be supported by CPD (facilitated by PDST), in both the English and Irish curricula, combined with ongoing elective support where possible. In June 2018 64% of our pupils attained a score above the 50th percentile while 21% of our pupils scored STEN 1-3. In June 2019, only 50% of our pupils achieved above the 50th percentile, while 31% of our pupils scored STEN 1-3. This may appear to be a decrease in our pupils' achievements but more likely reflects the i) re-standardisation of test norms, ii) the new test layout, iii) the new procedure for answering the test, iv) the change in length of the test and v) the move towards the language new curriculum, away from structure of our First Steps approach (Department of Education and Skills report on national test results from 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 showed heavily skewed results compared with test norms, hence re-standardisation). We will endeavour to maintain or increase the percentage of pupils achieving above the 50th percentile and decrease the percentage of pupils scoring in the STEN 1-3 range. We have also targeted for observation and support pupils who have dropped two or more STEN in the new test. Please see SSE Folder for same.*
- ii. In order to continue to progress our numeracy practice and scores, ten minutes of oral maths will continue to preface the beginning of every numeracy lesson, 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. These areas remain prioritised for improvement along with constancy in a spiralled approach to maths language. Problem solving will continue to be addressed through 'Brain Snack' as an integral approach to each daily lesson, along with adopting the use of Maths Challenge/Mathemagic as an in-class activity, regularly revising topics in the curriculum.*
- iii. We will introduce the 'Suas' numeracy programme as an additional support to pupils in Second and Third Class with a number of volunteers - comparable to the Time to Read programme which has been a significant support to literacy and pupils in Second Class each year over the last four years.*
- iv. We will continue to engage with our new SPHE policy and the Stay Safe programme as an aspect of the SPHE curriculum. SPHE and RSE are key components in supporting our school and children to develop into healthy young adults. As we have reviewed our timetable for the Stay Safe programme, within our SPHE policy, we will ensure we continue to implement the SPHE in an appropriate manner in the academic year 2019/2020.*
- v. In light of the variety of the curriculum in Physical Education that has been improved, the school will apply for 'Active School' status. The invested approach of all teachers has ensured that physical literacy has been developed, particularly through the introduction of the Daily Mile. Structured lessons outlined above have contributed to*

this and we hope that we can gain recognition of our achievements over the last three years by the reward of 'Active School' status.

- vi. *The attendance for 2017/2018 was 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 and June. These months will continue to be targeted specifically, to endeavour to maintain the attendance rate of 93% evident at the beginning of the academic year. This proved relatively successful in the 2018/2019 academic year as we achieved an attendance rate of 91% (boys had a 91% attendance rate, girls had an attendance rate of 91.3%). We will endeavour to maintain this increase and improve our attendance rate to 92% in the academic year 2019/2020. Pupils who have missed more than 20 days in the preceding academic year will also be purposely targeted (44 pupils have missed 20 days or more in the 2018/2109 academic year, in 2017/2018 59 pupils had 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).