



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

## ***School Self-Evaluation Report Summary Report for School Community***

*Evaluation period: September 2018 to June 2019*

*Report issue date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019*

***School self-evaluation***

## *Summary School Self-Evaluation Report*

### **1. Introduction**

*St. Kevin's National School is a school that serves the parish of Our Lady of Victories and the surrounding environs in the community of Sallynoggin. St. Kevin's N.S. is a DEIS Band I urban primary school and consequently a number of initiatives run alongside our academic programmes and teaching of the national curriculum. Our academic approaches include the new language curriculum (subsuming First Steps Writing and Reading), DEAR Time, Reading Recovery, Power Hour (literacy and numeracy). The learning environment in St. Kevin's 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. All teachers are empathetic and all teaching objectives, where apposite, are in sympathy with the school DEIS action plan. All teachers ensure the engagement of pupils and employ a range of methodologies, from 'active learning', station teaching, to peer instruction and mixed ability grouping. In addition, a range of in-class initiatives such as 'power hour' for literacy and numeracy, 'First Steps' writing strategies, 'Brain Snack' problem solving, mental maths and support team teaching are in place and working very well.*

*With respect to additional areas reviewed as part of the overarching evaluation report, in particular, attendance and area partnerships, it has identified pupils' engagement with learning improves with increased attendance. Partnership with outside agencies that promotes pupils' engagement with learning is intrinsic to the holistic approach of St. Kevin's. This was apparent in initiatives such as Parent and Pupil Art, Parent and Pupil Maths for Fun, Parent and Pupil Shared Reading, Parent and Pupil Gardening Club, Adventure Club, Chess Club, our 'Science Fair', school assemblies, exhibitions and additional courses, all of which assisted the learning of our pupils. In addition, we also linked with Baxter Healthcare and the Business in the Community, Zurich 'Time to Read' initiative. In the academic year 2019/2020 we will continue and endeavour to enhance these activities, including the 'Suas' numeracy initiative. .*

*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. Our attendance levels are good and improving. Our pupils' behaviour is excellent. Further information on how we intend to improve our teaching and the learning of our pupils is outlined in our School Self Evaluation Plan 2018/2019, School Self Improvement Plan 2019/2020 and our DEIS Action Plans 2019/2020.*

## **1.1 The focus of the evaluation**

*We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the year. We evaluated*

- i. Literacy*
- ii. Numeracy*
- iii. Other curriculum areas*
- iv. Attendance*
- v. Area Partnerships*

*This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have been prioritised for improvement.*

## **2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings**

*We collected information from parents, pupils and teachers in preparing this report. This was undertaken through formal and informal meetings, surveys and questionnaires. We looked at how well our pupils were doing in literacy, numeracy and physical education.*

**2.1** *We found that 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 apposite, 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.*

***We know these are our strengths because of standardised test results, incidental inspections, the peer appraisal of visiting educational professionals, the appraisal of parents and the self-reflective practice of the teaching staff.***

***2.2 We have decided to prioritise the following areas for 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 follows 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 were 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 2018/2019 academic year, in 2017/2018 59 pupils had missed 20 days or more).*

*We have decided to prioritise these areas because while significant gains have been made, literacy and numeracy levels remain insufficient to equip a number of pupils with the requisite basis and scaffolding to successfully navigate second level and have a reasonable expectation of accessing third level education. Naturally, attendance is essential to achieving the requisite foundations for this expectation. However, it should be noted that we endeavour to teach with a pedagogy that is underpinned by pastoral care and we endeavour to educate pupils that are empathetic, law-abiding and culturally aware as much as pupils that are literate and numerate. Our strategy will be to conform to statutory edicts but to try to do so in a way that vivifies our practice, which engages creativity and which seeks to structure a progressive pedagogy. To allow the space for imagination and spontaneity within a necessarily highly structured approach is not a balance easily achieved or always readily understood but that is our challenge – and we endeavour at St. Kevin's to provide an educational experience that is at once edifying and striving towards excellence.*

*Appendix to Primary School Self-Evaluation Report:  
legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community*

<p><i>Rules and regulations for schools are set out in a number of Education Acts, and in Circulars issued to schools from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills. The list below deals with important areas of school life and tells you what rules and regulations apply to them. You will find the Acts and Circulars mentioned on the Department's website, <a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>.</i></p>	
<i>Which area of school life is involved, and what are the regulations?</i>	<i>Is the school following the regulations fully?</i>
<p><b>The school calendar and the school timetable</b> Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 183 days</p> <p>Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school day 4 hours 40 minutes (infants); 5 hours 40 minutes (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Parent/ teacher meetings and staff meetings</b> Circular 14/04 sets out the arrangements for these meetings</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers</b> Circular 0008/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 36 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Standardisation of school year</b> Circular 034/2011 gives the dates for school holidays</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Valid enrolment of pupils</b> Sections of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the Rules for National Schools set out the conditions for pupils to be validly enrolled in a school</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Pupils repeating a year</b> The circumstances in which pupils may repeat a year are set out in Rules for National Schools, and circulars 11/01 and 32/03</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Development of school plan</b> Section 21, Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Engagement with SSE process</b> Circular 39/2012 outlines the school self-evaluation process and what it requires of schools</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Time for literacy and numeracy - assessing and reporting literacy and numeracy achievement</b> Circular 56/2011 sets out initial actions required in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Exemption from Irish</b> Circular 12/96 sets out the circumstances in which children are exempt from studying Irish</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of child protection procedures</b> Circular 0065/2011 and the Child Protection Guidelines oblige schools to ensure that: liaison persons have been appointed; the procedures have been communicated to the whole school community; and the procedures are being followed</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate</b> Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>



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<i>Which area of school life is involved, and what are the regulations?</i>	<i>Is the school following the regulations fully?</i>
<p><i>Appeals in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension and expulsion (permanent exclusion)</i></p> <p><i>Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for appeals procedures in these cases, which are dealt with first of all by the school. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><i>Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>

*Appendix to Primary School Self-Evaluation Report: policy checklist – reporting to the school community*

<i>Schools are required to have certain policies in place as part of their permanent school plan. It is good practice for schools to consult with the school community in forming and reviewing many of these policies. The school board of management has to approve and ratify policies, and should ensure that they are reviewed on a regular basis.</i>	
<i>What area of school life does the policy deal with and what is the aim of the policy?</i>	<i>Has policy been approved by the board of management?</i>
<b>Enrolment policy</b> <i>Section (15)(2)(d) Education Act 1998 obliges schools to have and publish an enrolment policy that respects the principles of equality and parental choice</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Code of behaviour</b> <i>Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Anti-bullying policy</b> <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools, 2013 sets out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing an anti-bullying policy</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Attendance and participation strategy</b> <i>Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of pupil attendance and participation in school life</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Health and safety statement</b> <i>All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Data protection</b> <i>School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on pupils should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Internet acceptable use policy</b> <i>Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct pupils on safe and responsible use of the internet. See <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> for guidelines</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Special education needs policy</b> <i>Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of pupils with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy</b> <i>Schools are required to have an RSE policy and to implement it in line with Relationships and Sexuality Education: Policy Guidelines (1997)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Substance use policy</b> <i>The National Drugs Strategy and Department Guidelines require schools to develop and implement a policy on substance use, in partnership with parents and other agencies</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Child protection and Child Safety Statement and policy</b> <i>Circular 0065/2011 sets out requirements (see above for details of policy and implementation)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parents as partners</b> <i>Circular 24/91 requests schools to set up a parents' association, and promotes partnership between home and school</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<i>Deployment of special needs assistants</i> <i>Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of the school</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Yes</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No</i>
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