

St. Caimin's Community School



OUR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2020 – 2021

Context:

The work of the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) team and that of the management and staff in this area for 2021 – 2022 was guided by Circular 0041/2020 which stated that the *'Department of Education and Skills recognises that because of the extended period of school closure that has taken place since 12 March 2020, students, parents, teachers, principals, coordinators and Boards of Management may have been unable to engage in SSE activity during this time. In view of this, the Department of Education and Skills is extending the second cycle of SSE until June 2021'*. The management and SSE team made the decision to complete work on the aspects of teaching and learning that had been selected as the focus for self-evaluation in the period 2016-2020. It was also decided that the SSE team would support the Digital Learning Team with the review and development of the Digital Learning Plan 2020 – 2021.

Table 1 highlights the targets and actions of Cycle 2 of SSE in which there was a focus on

- 1) Arrangements for continuous assessment of students and
- 2) Feedback provided in class and on school reports

Table 1: Targets and Actions of SSE Improvement Plan 2018 - 2019

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success
<p><i>To further develop feedback and reporting practices to ensure students and parents know where improvements can be made.</i></p>	<p>Whole school level: School reports will be adapted to ensure a greater number of feedback options are available. These comments will be structured so students can improve their grades and drive their learning forward.</p> <p>Department level: Subject departments will develop common approaches to feedback for Classroom Based Assessments</p> <p>Classroom level: Students will receive focused feedback at classroom level linked to learning outcomes and the success criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • School improvement team • Subject departments • Subject teacher • NCCA material on formative feedback will be accessed and explored by staff and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will receive reports that explain where improvements in each subject are outlined. • Students will receive are greater variety of comments on their report cards. • Students will receive focused feedback on their Classroom Based Assessment. • Students will be provided with focused feedback and will be clear on where mistakes were made and how work can be improved.

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success
<p><i>To develop continuous assessment practices and increase the percentage of students and staff that feel the modes of assessment are effective.</i></p>	<p>Whole school level: Improve communication between management, staff and students on the topics covered and assessed for the Christmas examinations.</p> <p>Department level: Subject departments will decide on the three pieces of work students will be assessed on for the Christmas examinations and will provide a timeline for which these pieces will be assessed.</p> <p>Classroom level: Teachers will communicate and display details and timelines for assessments in their classrooms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic calendar will be updated regularly by management and staff. • Increase communication with parents regarding the dates and types of assessments would be completing through newsletter. <p>• Subject departments</p> <p>Assessment posters will be designed and provided to each teacher for their subject area. These will be displayed in the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management, teaching staff and students are aware of the different periods in the school year when assessment is taking place. • Development of Assessment Policy • Subject plans will include information about continuous assessment <p>Classroom walls will display assessment information for the Christmas and Summer terms.</p>

Progress made on achievement of targets identified in Table 1:

Table 2: Progress made on achievement of targets identified from previous improvement plan

Target	Progress achieved
<i>To further develop feedback and reporting practices to ensure students and parents know where improvements can be made.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback templates were developed and share among departments to help with providing students with feedback on their Classroom Based Assessments• Training was provided at department level on the area of Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and Formative Feedback.• School reports were adapted to provide students with clear feedback on where improvements can be made in their work
<i>To develop continuous assessment practices and increase the percentage of students and staff that feel the modes of assessment are effective.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearer structures of communication with students and parents about the nature and timing of assessments were developed through information newsletters, classroom assessment boards and assessment calendars.• Assessment policy was developed by all stakeholders and ratified by Board of Management on 30th January 2020.

In the last year (2020 - 2021), we have looked at teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well. This is what we discovered:

Student focus groups, questionnaires and feedback from staff indicate that:

1. Staff and students engagement with ICT to assist Learning and Teaching I(in school and online) and teachers individual and collective practice is working well.
2. Sharing of classroom practices and capturing examples of best practice is proving effective and is well received by staff.
3. The '*Learning to Learn*' initiative has been used effectively with 2nd, 3rd and LC2 students.
4. There is an ongoing focus and discussion on Assessment for Learning, in particular the sharing of Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and the provision of Formative Feedback strategies.

This is what we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:

1. Student focus groups
2. Student survey
3. Teacher feedback

This is what we worked on:

The following actions were taken by the SSE team in 2020 – 2021 to further enhance Learner Outcomes and Learning Experiences in particular focusing on the quality of feedback provided to students the development of assessment practices across the school:

1. A ‘*Learning to Learn*’ and goal setting programme was refined and implemented with 2nd Year, 3rd Year and LC2 students. The programme looked at growth mindset and study techniques that students could use to help with their homework and performance in assignments and assessments. Students in LC2 who requested additional assistance were facilitated in one to one and small group sessions during the year.
2. Examples of good practice relating to Assessment for Learning continued to be captured electronically and shared through the SSE Learning and Teaching newsletters. The focus of these resources was to use ICT strategies to support Assessment for Learning strategies in the classroom.
3. Supports and resources to help with the provision of formative feedback were developed. Examples of formative feedback from end of term reports were collected. A session for staff on formative feedback was developed with a view to roll out at the start of term 2021 – 2022. Allocation from the Croke Park hours 2021 – 2022 has been given to allow staff the time to provide formative feedback in end of term reports.
4. Support was provided to the Digital Learning Team on addressing targets and actions identified in the revised Digital Learning Plan. The SSE team helped in particular with the realisation of the following targets and actions.

<u>Target 2:</u> Develop and share practices that use digital technologies to enhance assessment for learning.	<u>Actions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Explore how digital Technologies can be used to share learning intentions and success criteria.– Explore how digital technologies can be used to provide feedback to students.
<u>Target 3:</u> Provision of practical professional development opportunities at formal and informal levels.	<u>Actions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Carry out a needs analysis on the professional development required.– Provision of appropriate professional development opportunities from internal and external providers

5. Areas for future professional developed have been identified for the coming academic year. These include: Support for students in the ASD hub, Differentiation (whole staff provided by NCSE), and Teacher mentor planning and training for those involved in mentoring.

This is what you can do to help:

- Browse the material available on the school website explaining School Self Evaluation, Assessment for Learning and Formative Feedback.
- Read your student's report at the end of term and discuss the Formative Feedback your child has received with them.
- Encourage your son/daughter to pay particular attention to the Formative Feedback they receive from teachers on a regular basis. They should be clear on where they are achieving in a subject and what are the steps, they should take to reach their full potential.
- Remind your son/ daughter to reflect regularly on their learning and to note areas for improvement on each unit of work they are studying.
- Encourage your son/daughter to take greater ownership and responsibility for their learning.
- Encourage your son/daughter to plan their own revision, to set targets and to track their progress and use the skills developed in the Learning to Learn sessions.
- Check your son/daughter's journal regularly and sign weekly.
- Check out the school's assessment policy and help support students as they prepare for their various assessments during the school year.
- Discuss the importance of school attendance with your child. Ensure that they attend school.

Here is some information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education and Skills requires us to do.

School time and holidays

- The Department requires all post-primary schools to have **167 school days** each year, and a **28-hour school week**. Please note that as of the 11th of January 2021 these school days took place online as guided by the 'Continuity of Learning' guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- This year we had **167** school days, from 31/08/2019 to 28/05/2020. Our school week is 28 hours.
- The Department sets out a **standardised school year and school holidays**.
- This year we took all our school holidays within the permitted time. **YES**
- The Department sets out arrangements for **parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**. This year we had 0 parent/teacher meetings and 4 staff meetings, all in line with the Department's regulations. Please note that one of these staff meetings took place online due to Covid-19 closure of schools. In lieu of parent teacher meeting year heads of exam classes were freed up for a day to field calls from parents giving informed reports on students' progress and answering questions that parents had.

Looking after the children in our school

- The Department requires schools to follow the *Child Protection Procedures* it has set down. Our board of management has agreed in writing to do this. **YES**
- All teachers know about the *Procedures* and we have told all parents about them and how we follow them. **YES**
- Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mr. Alan Cunningham and our Deputy DLP is Ms. Derval Glendon-Garry

Enrolment and attendance

- The Department requires schools to have and publish an admissions policy, to record and report attendance accurately, and to encourage high attendance and participation.
- We have an admissions policy, and it is published. **YES**
- We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy during this academic year. It was ratified by the Board of Management in September 2020.
- We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. **YES**
- We encourage high attendance in the following ways: Reward good attendance. Encourage attendance at assemblies and information evenings with parents. This is how you can help: Discuss the importance of school attendance with your child. Ensure that they attend school.

Positive behaviour for a happy school

- The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour and asks us to consult parents and students about it. We do this. **YES**
- Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. **YES**
- We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school. **YES**