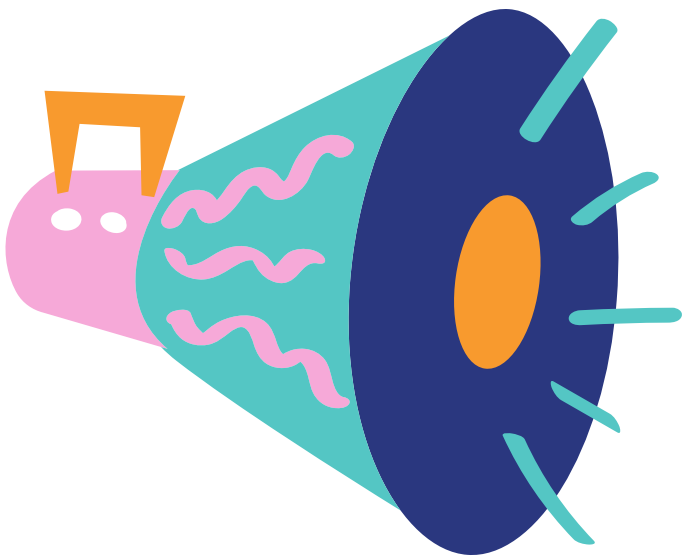


# SSE UPDATE



## NEW!

- Check & Connect
- Wellbeing Weeks
- Student Awards
- Quiet space
- Active learning
- Student voice
- Attendance strategy

## Our Mission

Our Lady's Secondary School is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School operating under the trusteeship of CEIST according to the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy. We, the staff and students, enjoy working together to realise our full potential in a healthy, safe, stimulating and friendly environment where the atmosphere is one of mutual respect, cooperation and challenge. We take a holistic approach focusing on the wellbeing and development of each individual socially, culturally and academically. Within our school community, each student is treated equally. All are considered uniquely talented, with effort valued as much as excellence. On a day-to-day basis, the Christian message inspires everyone in the school to be charitable, inclusive and understanding.

## What is School Self Evaluation?

Our Lady's Secondary School aims to make small positive changes each year, so we draft something called a School Improvement Plan annually. To develop this plan, we collect extensive feedback from parents, teachers and students on a specific aspect of school life. Then, a team that includes Senior Management and the School Self Evaluation Coordinator analyse the information looking at what we are doing well and areas that need improvement. This is part of an initiative that all schools are asked to undertake called School Self Evaluation.

In 2023/24 we went to the Inspectorate and asked them to come to our school and chat about ways to improve how we plan. Happily, the Inspectors were impressed with what we have already done!

In the past, we reported on our successes and areas for improvement in a document called a School Self Evaluation Report. This weighty document was usually jam packed with statistics and figures. The Inspectorate helpfully suggested that we report our findings in a more user-friendly way. Hence, this new simpler format for our School Self Evaluation Report.



## Our previous actions

- Ensuring each faculty has a plan in the area of formative assessment (i.e. more responsive teaching)
- Helping students with their study skills
- Using the school journal more so students become more responsible for their own learning
- Having posters to highlight literacy
- Encouraging students to estimate so as to improve their numeracy
- Sharing resources digitally using the Google network
- Having common tests in 1st and 2nd year so learners have a more uniform experience
- Using alternative methods of assessment, e.g. project work, presentations
- Focusing on key words to improve literacy

# What we know about our school

The Department of Education have asked all schools to draft an Improvement Plan specifically to improve student wellbeing, so this is our focus for 2024/5. We have gathered lots of data relating to Wellbeing already and here are a few things we found out;

·The school is highly effective in supporting student wellbeing with 99% of parents agreeing that the school takes good care of 'children's general wellbeing.' But in focus groups with students, we found that a small number of students feel a little disconnected. Some of these are students already involved with Student Support, while others are not.

·Our current Wellbeing Weeks are popular with students, but in focus groups some expressed concern that the volume of work was not reduced in all classes. Also, in our parents' survey, not all parents were aware of the awareness activities that took place.

·Teachers speaking at the Teaching & Learning Committee felt that the current system of rewarding positive behaviour is not working as well as it should.

·When surveyed, our first years reported being very happy in school generally but teachers' observations suggest that some students with additional needs would benefit from having access to a quiet space in the school.

·97% of parents thought the quality of teaching in the school was good/very good. The area where most parents thought we could work on was 'active learning'. Student focus groups reported generally positive attitudes to teachers but some did feel they were more active learners in certain classes.

·The minutes of Student Council meetings give the team analysing the data a really good insight into the views of students. However, students' opinions and voices need to be more effectively integrated into broader policy formation.

·When surveyed, parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the Compass App. However, during discussions, the School Self Evaluation Team noted that the full potentials of the App are not being utilised, particularly in identifying those with attendance issues. While the attendance tracking feature is in its early stages, we recognise its importance as a key component in supporting student wellbeing.

**So, we aim to take seven actions this year to improve student wellbeing. We want to make small changes that can be sustained and positively contribute to student wellbeing on an ongoing basis. Each action we plan to take is very specific and can be measured against pre-existing data from surveys, focus groups, minutes etc. Moreover, a particular individual/team has responsibility for implementing each action.**



# 7 areas for actions in 2024/25

**1. Culture:** We are going to try and improve targeted supports for children and young people experiencing barriers and challenges to wellbeing by relaunching our 'Check-and-Connect programme'. We hope to provide one-to-one mentoring to 40 students who are currently not receiving pastoral support. A team of teachers linked to the Student Support Committee in school will lead this action.

**2. Culture:** We are going to have five Wellbeing Weeks during the year with a focus on including those from different cultural backgrounds, those with additional needs and all sexual orientations. The good news for students is that they should get reduced homework during these weeks. The weeks will be organised by different faculties and we will gather data to check the Wellbeing Weeks have been impactful. The postholder with responsibility for SSE will coordinate these weeks.

**3. Teaching & Learning:** We want to make sure a broad range of student successes are rewarded and celebrated, so we are changing the format of the Wellbeing Awards. Students and parents will again get a physical award to mark their achievement. We hope that a third of our students get an award this year. The postholder with responsibility for Wellbeing will coordinate the awards.

**4. Environment:** A quiet room will be introduced so that the physical environment is modified to meet the needs of young people with additional and/or complex needs. Senior Management will organise this space.

**5. Teaching and Learning:** The Teaching and Learning Committee will focus on sharing methodologies to encourage collaborative learning in the classroom. At least one whole staff CPD event in this area will be held in 2024/5. Data will be gathered to gauge the impact on learner experience. The postholder with responsibility for Teaching and Learning will coordinate this action.

**6. Policy & Planning:** We are going to create a subcommittee of the Student Council to focus on policy so that the voice of young people informs the development, review and updating of school policies. The postholder with responsibility for policy will coordinate this action.

**7. Policy & Planning:** We are going to use Compass Software to gather better information on risk factors, particularly absenteeism, to inform wellbeing programme planning. We aim to decrease the amount of 'unmarked rolls'. Senior Management will coordinate this action.

## Appendix to School Self-Evaluation Report: legislative and regulatory checklist (Post-Primary)

This is not an exhaustive checklist. It is intended to assist the board of management in carrying out its leadership and management responsibilities and functions, as set out in the Education Act (1998), and within the context of its own school. The completed checklist will contain sensitive information and should be treated as confidential.

Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Time in school - Length of school year (minimum of 167 days for all year groups) - Length of school week (minimum of 28 hours for all year groups)	Circular M29/95	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 0009/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Procedures for submission of data returns to the Department	Circular 0038/2014 DTR returns procedures information, updated annually on education.ie  Pod and PPOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Repeating a year – conditions to be met	M2/95	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Annual returns to Tusla on attendance, suspension and exclusion	Section 21 Education (Welfare) Act 2000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Implementation of national agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 0043/2014 Circular 0045/2016, points 21-25	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Engagement with school self-evaluation process	Circular 0040/2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Whole-school guidance plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998, Section 21 Education Act 1998, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Guidance provision in post-primary schools	Section 9(c), Education Act 1998, Circular PPT12/05, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy	Circular 25/2012, Circular 42/2015, Interim Review and New Targets (2017, DES)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2017/18 and 2018/19	Circular 0015/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
In-school management structures	Part V Education Act 1998, 0003/2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Approved allocation of teaching posts for 2018/19	Circulars 0007, 0008, 0009/2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Leadership and management posts	Circular 0003/2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Digital Strategy	Circular 0001/2017 and 0011/2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
and Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure	Digital Learning Plan  Use of the Digital Learning Framework	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Implementation of Child Protection Procedures 2017	Circular 0081/2017 Please record the following information in relation to child protection as reported to the board Child Protection Oversight Report presented at each board meeting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Number of reports submitted by the DLP to Tusla and reported to the board 7 Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla and as a result of this advice, no report was made 0 Number of cases where a mandated person other than the DLP made a report to Tusla and notified the DLP 0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Implementation of vetting requirements	National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 Circular 0026/2015 Circular 0016/2017: Statutory Requirements for Retrospective Vetting Child Protection Procedures 2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Section 28 Education Act 1998 Please record the following information in relation to complaints made by parents during this school year Number of formal parental complaints received 0 Number of formal complaints processed 0 Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year 0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No  N/A	
Refusal to enrol	Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year Number of section 29 cases taken against the school 0 Number of cases processed at informal stage 0 Number of cases heard 0 Number of appeals upheld 0 Number of appeals dismissed 0	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No  N/A	
Suspension of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year Number of section 29 cases taken against the school 0 Number of cases processed at informal stage 0 Number of cases heard 0 Number of appeals upheld 0 Number of appeals dismissed 0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	



Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed										
	<div>Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year</div> <table><tr><td>Number of section 29 cases taken against the school</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Number of cases processed at informal stage</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Number of cases heard</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Number of appeals upheld</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Number of appeals dismissed</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0	Number of cases heard	0	Number of appeals upheld	0	Number of appeals dismissed	0	N/A	
Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0												
Number of cases processed at informal stage	0												
Number of cases heard	0												
Number of appeals upheld	0												
Number of appeals dismissed	0												

## Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist (Post-Primary)

Policy	Relevant legislation, circulars, guidelines	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Enrolment policy	Section 15(2)(d) of Education Act Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 Circular M51/93	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Attendance and participation strategy <sup>1</sup>	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy <sup>2</sup> Dignity in the Workplace Charter	Circular M33/91 NEWB guidelines <i>Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools</i> Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary schools</i> 2013, and Circular 45/13 Section 8(2)(b), Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Child Protection Procedures and Child Safeguarding Statement	Circular 0081/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Annual attendance report to Tusla and Parents' Association	Section 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Critical Incident Management policy	Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines and Resource Materials, NEPS 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Data protection	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018: see <a href="http://www.dataprotectionschools.ie">www.dataprotectionschools.ie</a>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Special educational needs / Inclusion policy <sup>3</sup>	Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) <sup>4</sup> (2004) Disability Act (2005) Circular 0014/2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, 0027/08	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Substance use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Internet acceptable use policy	National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE) Guidelines, 2012 ( <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
For DEIS schools only:  DEIS Action Plan	DEIS Plan 2017 Department of Education and Skills Guidelines on the appropriate use of the DEIS Grant (updated annually)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

<sup>1</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22) the school's attendance strategy should conform to the provisions stipulated.  
<sup>2</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.  
<sup>3</sup> Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) requires a school to "use its available resources" to identify and provide for the educational needs of those "with a disability or other special educational needs."  
<sup>4</sup> The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.