

## 1. Introduction

This document records the status of our previous School Improvement Plans. Furthermore, the next focus for School Self Evaluation (SSE) is also identified in the report. The SSE process at Our Lady's follows the six stage process that the Department of Education recommends as illustrated in figure 1. In 2019/20, an improvement plan in the area of Wellbeing was partially implemented (Stage 5), while there was ongoing monitoring of previous plans (Stage 6). In 2020/21, no new plan will be introduced. Rather, the Wellbeing Plan will be concluded and evidence for a new plan in the area of 'Questioning' will be gathered (Stage 2). A copy of the Wellbeing Plan is on page 4 of this document.

**Fig 1. Six Stages of SSE Process**



Self-Evaluation is an important means to develop and improve our organisation. We understand that this requires whole school engagement involving parents, students and teachers. We welcome ideas at any stage of the process and at the end of the document we list some ways you can help us.

This particular document is a summary of a lengthier report that is available from the Principal on request.

### 1.1 Outcomes of our last improvement plans from September 2012 to May 2020

School Self Evaluation Plans in our school focussed on the areas of Literacy (2012-2016), Numeracy (2012-2016), Assessment for Learning (2012-2016), Information & Communication Technology (2017-2018) and most recently Wellbeing (2019-20).

Our older School Improvement Plans are still being monitored by;

- A Literacy subcommittee under the stewardship of Mr Lyons.
- A Numeracy committee under the guidance of Ms Higgins.
- Assessment for Learning plan analysed by the Teaching and Learning Committee.
- ICT is being overseen by a long established school committee in that area under guidance of Ms Lynch.

## 1.2 The focus of this evaluation

The action plan on Wellbeing has not been fully implemented nor have actions been satisfactorily evaluated due to Covid 19 restrictions. In 2020/21, we will therefore focus on stage 5 and 6 of the SSE process with regard to the Wellbeing plan (i.e. 'Putting Improvement Plan into Action' and 'Monitoring Actions').

## 2. Findings

### 2.1 From our research we can conclude that this is effective / very effective practice in our school;

*Students' achievement in summative assessments, including certificate examinations, is in line with or above expectations.<sup>1</sup>*

*Teachers have the required professional qualifications and have engaged in a range of continuing professional development (CPD) relevant to students' learning.*

*Teachers demonstrate competence and proficiency in the pedagogical skills required in their subject area, and for developing students' learning across and beyond the curriculum.*

*Teachers view collaboration as a means to improve student learning and to enhance their own professional development. They engage in constructive collaborative practice, and in collaborative review of practice.*

*Students demonstrate very high levels of interest and participation in learning.*

*Students' experiences as learners reflect consistently well on how the code of behaviour is understood and implemented.*

*Teachers have high expectations of students' work and behaviour, communicate these expectations effectively to students, and facilitate students in internalising them.*

*Teachers integrate relevant literacy and numeracy skills into the fabric of the lesson.*

### 2.2. This is how we know:

- Each subject faculty submits an analysis of performance in state exams. Results in State Examinations are consistently above the national average across subjects.
- Each faculty produces a written record (minutes) as do various committees (Strategic Planning, Teaching and Learning, Literacy, Numeracy, ICT). This illustrates the degree of collaboration among staff.
- Parents are surveyed after parent teacher meetings and the responses indicate very positive attitudes towards teaching and learning within the school.
- Focus groups are conducted with students and parents that indicate very good relations between students and teachers as well as between students and other students (Some of these had to be cancelled due to Covid-19).
- Teacher feedback in terms of staff surveys and engagement with new initiatives indicates that teachers collaborate with colleagues to achieve the best outcomes for students.
- Meanwhile, among the observations made in a Whole School Evaluation report by Department of Education Inspectors (Mathematics) was that;  
    "The standard of learning and teaching observed throughout the evaluation was consistently very high. Many examples of excellent practice were noted in all lessons."

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<sup>1</sup> Statements in Italic are 'Statements of Highly Effective Practice' from the *Looking at Our Schools* document.

The Transition Year Inspector (2020) found;

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was very good in the lessons observed.
- In all lessons visited teachers have successfully created inclusive learning environments based on mutual respect, affirmation and trust.
- An effective range of assessment approaches was used in the majority of lessons observed; in some lessons there was a need for questions to challenge students further.
- One-to-one meetings with first year students as well as one-to-one monthly meetings with sixth year students and once a term meetings with third year students by senior management indicate that students feel able to contribute their opinions and experiences.
- The Student Council delivers further worthwhile feedback on student's views supporting all the above findings.

## **2.2 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further**

### **Literacy, Numeracy, ICT & AFL (Previous Plans)**

In these area, committees will continue to monitor, implement and revise previous plans.

### **Wellbeing**

We introduced a one way system, achievement slips, more active teaching methodologies, wellbeing weeks but did not fully complete all our plan nor did we evaluate it due to Covid-19 restrictions (see page 4). We will do this in 2020/21.

### **The next plan**

The school's Teaching and Learning committee in 2019/2020 analysed a lot data and concluded that 'Questioning' would be a good focus for further school improvement. This is simply how teachers and students ask questions in class. We want to get better in this area. So, in 2020/21, we will gather evidence on this topic (stage 2) and once the Wellbeing Plan is implemented we'll introduce a new plan on Questioning.

### **So how can Parents/Students/Teachers Help?**

1. Help us come up with new ideas for school self-evaluation in later years. Use surveys, conversations with teachers and suggestion boxes as an opportunity to have your voice heard.
2. Help us gather information by completing surveys and volunteering to be involved in focus groups.
3. Give feedback on existing plans and how they can be improved.
4. Students and Teachers can do their bit and implement the plans.

Mr Mulroe is the teacher who coordinates the SSE process so questions can be directed to him directly or any member of the Senior Management Team [smt@olss.ie](mailto:smt@olss.ie).

## **3. Our Improvement Plan**

Our improvement plan for Wellbeing is outlined below.

Targets	Actions	Persons responsible	Criteria for success
Increase in teachers reporting use of formative assessment practices	Each subject department to produce a one page strategy on how to implement <b>formative assessment</b> practices. Departments to focus their planning in particular on how formative assessment can support the key wellbeing indicators of 'being aware' and 'respected'. Faculties to also consider how best to share best practice in the area of formative assessment.	Faculty Head	Greater engagement by teachers in formative assessment. Students reporting more formative assessment practices in the classroom.
More students to receive positive affirmation on eportal.	The introduction of <b>achievement slips</b> . These will be completed by teachers acknowledging good conduct by students. On a monthly basis senior school management will present achievement slips to students, parents will also be notified and a record made on eportal.	P. Mulroe	More students being recognised for their contribution to school life. A greater sense of 'connectedness' between teachers and students. Students taking action to promote their own wellbeing and that of others
First years and their parents reporting lower levels of homework compared with 2018/19	The introduction of a <b>wellbeing week</b> with all teachers involved ensuring reduced levels of homework on Monday and Thursday of the last week of each month.	All teachers	Students, teachers and parents noting that the workload has been reduced particularly students in exam years and those transitioning to the school.
Students, parents and teachers reporting greater awareness of wellbeing related issue.	During <b>wellbeing week</b> , teachers to be involved in awareness campaigns targeted at all students in the areas of spirituality, healthy eating, being active etc. led by different departments.	Depts (Music, PE, RE, Home EC, History, Amber Flag, Wellbeing)	Increased awareness of importance of wellbeing in areas of spirituality, healthy eating, mental health, sport.
More positive interaction	A policy introduced where all teachers are actively encouraged to <b>greet students</b> at either start or end of each class.	All teachers	More positive low level interactions between students and staff.
To visibly reduce congestion in the area around the toilets in the small GPA	Introduce a new <b>one way system</b> and erect signposts to alleviate congestion.	Principal, P. Mulroe	Students and new teachers transitioning to the school have a positive experience in corridors.
To ensure first year students report when surveyed that they were made aware of the full range of the school's extracurricular activities	The launch of a new <b>Clubs &amp; Societies day</b> at start of year where students can sign up to join clubs/teams.	PE department	All extracurricular activities in the school attempt to recruit new members at the Club & Society day.

## 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	Yes  Yes	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 0009/2017	Yes	
Procedures for submission of data returns to the Department	Circular 0038/2014 DTR returns procedures information, updated annually on education.ie  Pod and PPOD	Yes	
Repeating a year – conditions to be met	M2/95	Yes	
Annual returns to Tusla on attendance, suspension and exclusion	Section 21 Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	
Implementation of national agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 0043/2014 Circular 0045/2016, points 21-25	Yes	
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	Yes	
Engagement with school self-evaluation process	Circular 0040/2016	Yes	
Whole-school guidance plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998, Section 21 Education Act 1998, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	Yes	
Guidance provision in post-primary schools	Section 9(c), Education Act 1998, Circular PPT12/05, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	Yes	
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94	Yes	

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
Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy	Circular 25/2012, Circular 42/2015, Interim Review and New Targets (2017, DES)	Yes	
Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2017/18 and 2018/19	Circular 0015/2017	Yes	
In-school management structures	Part V Education Act 1998, 0003/2018	Yes	
Approved allocation of teaching posts for 2018/19	Circulars 0007, 0008, 0009/2018	Yes	
Leadership and management posts	Circular 0003/2018	Yes	
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91	Yes	
Digital Strategy and Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure	Circular 0001/2017 and 0011/2018 Digital Learning Plan Use of the Digital Learning Framework	Yes Yes Yes	
Implementation of Child Protection Procedures 2017	Circular 0081/2017 Please record the following information in relation to child protection as reported to the board	Yes	
	Child Protection Oversight Report presented at each board meeting	Yes	
	Number of reports submitted by the DLP to Tusla and reported to the board	2	
	Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla and as a result of this advice, no report was made	2	
	Number of cases where a mandated person other than the DLP made a report to Tusla and notified the DLP	0	
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	Yes	
	Section 28 Education Act 1998	Yes	

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	
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	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
Refusal to enrol	Section 29 Education Act 1998	Yes		
	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			
Suspension of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998	Yes		
	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			
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998	Yes		

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										
	<p>Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="728 268 1467 539"> <tr> <td data-bbox="728 268 1279 325">Number of section 29 cases taken against the school</td> <td data-bbox="1279 268 1467 325">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="728 325 1279 381">Number of cases processed at informal stage</td> <td data-bbox="1279 325 1467 381">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="728 381 1279 437">Number of cases heard</td> <td data-bbox="1279 381 1467 437">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="728 437 1279 493">Number of appeals upheld</td> <td data-bbox="1279 437 1467 493">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="728 493 1279 539">Number of appeals dismissed</td> <td data-bbox="1279 493 1467 539">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		
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## 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	Yes	
Attendance and participation strategy <sup>2</sup>	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy <sup>3</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	Yes	
Child Protection Procedures and Child Safeguarding Statement	Circular 0081/2017	Yes	
Annual attendance report to Tusla and Parents' Association	Section 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	
Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20	Yes	
Critical Incident Management policy	Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines and Resource Materials, NEPS 2016	Yes	
Data protection	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018: see <a href="http://www.dataprotectionschools.ie">www.dataprotectionschools.ie</a>	Yes	

<sup>2</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22) the school's attendance strategy should conform to the provisions stipulated.

<sup>3</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.

Special educational needs / Inclusion policy <sup>4</sup>	Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) <sup>5</sup> (2004) Disability Act (2005)) Circular 0014/2017	Yes	
Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, 0027/08	Yes	
Substance use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002	Yes	
Internet acceptable use policy	National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE) Guidelines, 2012 ( <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> )	Yes	

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<sup>4</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>5</sup> The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.