

## St Colman's Community College, Midleton



### Our Summary of SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2019-2020

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This year the focus of our Self Evaluation Plan comprised of three elements

1. Literacy
2. Numeracy
3. Teaching and Learning - Attainment & Partnership with Parents - Feedback on Learning

**In the last year, we have looked at teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well.**

The main strengths of the school are the quality of teaching and learning and the willingness of the staff to embrace and share good practice in a collaborative manner. Co-teaching operates widely across all subjects. Google Drives have been set up to share teaching resources amongst all subject departments.

The development of successful teaching and learning initiatives such as the development of strategies to give feedback to students has improved learner outcomes.

Supports are provided for appropriately identified students, such as literacy, numeracy, curriculum support and personal development, as necessary.

The rapport between students and staff and the whole-school commitment to student wellbeing and student welfare is very good.

Attendance and retention strategies are working successfully to improve participation and engagement in education.

Prizes and incentive trips awarded to students with Gold/Platinum standard attendance over the school year. Platinum full/perfect. Gold 1 day missed in term. Silver 2 days missed in term. Bronze 3+ days missed. The data below shows us the benefits of effective intervention.

Comparison of attendance between Yr 2 and Yr 3 Term Sept-December (% of attendance)

	Full	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2018	10.4	12.2	8.7	68.0
2019	17.7	19.0	8.8	54.4

From the Every School day counts initiative in November by the HSCL/Partnership with Parents committee, the following results were obtained when compared to the year previous: In November 2018, during a 20 day period, 206 students had full attendance. November 2019, during the equivalent 20 day period, 285 students had full attendance. This was an increase of 38% on the previous year.

We have continued to develop strong links with parents and the community.

We have completed our first three year cycle of Performing Arts as a short course. This short course was drawn up to suit the needs of our students who are exempt from languages as well as supporting their literacy and numeracy needs. We are looking to further expand and develop our short courses for 2020/21.

Classroom layout has changed in approximately 90% of classrooms to reflect more interactive classroom work

More supervised study time opportunities were created for our 6th Year students.

Our lunch time Social Circle for our students in our Learning Centre has continued to expand and develop.

Our Subject Fair was organised for the second year running. Unfortunately it was cancelled due to Covid-19. Instead each department prepared a piece about their subject and it was published on our school website. This was to help our 3rd and TY students and their parents make informed subject choices for Leaving Certificate.

Videos of choice subjects for incoming first years were made and published on the school website again to help them and their parents to make informed subject choices.

We have continued to increase our students participation in STEAM

VEX Robotics is an exciting program where students learn about Science Technology Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM) while having fun! They design, build, program and compete with their robot in a game based engineering challenge organised by Dell. In addition to STEAM the students acquire other skills such as project management, presentation skills, teamwork, leadership, PR and much more.

This year we introduced the Lego Club. The aim of this club is to build many different features through the use of lego. A large cohort of students participated throughout the year. Mathematical skills, teamwork skills, communication skills, among others were all enhanced through participation in the club

Positive Behaviour Initiative

This year we introduced The Spirit of St. Colmans Hidden Hero. This initiative is to recognise the potential of all students regardless of academic and or sporting achievements. This was shown to be a very worthy and beneficial initiative which both teachers and students benefited from. It inadvertently promoted better communication, participation and engagement between staff and students.

Training was undertaken by a number of staff in Restorative Practice. It is hoped to continue to roll out training to more staff in 2020/21.

**In the last year, we have looked at teaching and learning on our school to find out what we are doing well, and what we could do better:**

Last year we introduced TEACHMEET to our staff. This has allowed for the increased development and skills in technology in the classroom. All teachers are now fully trained in the use of Google classroom and Google meets.

As a part of our Digital learning action plan this year we set out to increase student access to ICT for Teaching and Learning. One of the strands of the action plan was to implement a portable ipad solution with wifi for classrooms. This has been achieved and training has been delivered to a large number of staff.

Last year a number of staff were supplied with a box of resources to pilot an active learning project to focus on assessment for learning. Active Learning helps to enhance teaching and learning, students to develop key skills such as critical thinking, enhancing both the learner experience and learner outcomes. This has been rolled out to more staff and it is hoped to further increase this initiative in 2020/21.

Educational Coaching Initiative in partnership with UCC. This project involved 60 of our 5th year students.. The aim is to improve attainment. Results analysed. Pupils who underwent coaching improved individually by 22% between the Pre-Examinations & State Leaving Certificate. Those who received no coaching improved by 14%. Given its success it is hoped to roll out this initiative to 5th Years in 2020/21.

We have continued to develop our Student Voice.

1. This year we ran an election campaign amongst our sixth year students to promote the importance of student voice and Leadership. A Head Boy and Girl were elected by their peers and staff members. Our Head Boy and Girl represented the voice of students at Open night.
2. A new Student Council was established for 2019/20.. Each class elected a representative. All representatives were fully trained. A suggestion box was created to encourage further student input and participation. Our student representatives met with senior management throughout the year.
3. Students continue to have input into how they wish to receive effective feedback (Teaching and Learning DEIS group)
- 4.. We have continued to consult with our students in developing new policies, we have listened and acted on their feedback
5. There has been changes made to our TY programme due to consultation and feedback from our students
- .6. Last year's first years as part of the Digital Excellence Project produced a video detailing the life of a student in St. Colman's (The transition from Primary to Secondary School)

Teaching Learning and Assessment

This year a new initiative **Traffic Lights** was piloted in our school to promote teaching and assessment. The traffic light system can be used in a number of different ways.

1. To ascertain understanding of a task/assignment/concept.
2. To request help in completing an assignment without drawing attention to themselves.
3. Assessment

Traffic light indicators and charts were bought and distributed to teachers involved in the initiative. 83%of teachers found the initiative to be beneficial to both students and teachers in monitoring understanding.

92%of students reported that they used the traffic lights to show understanding.

75% of students found the initiative beneficial in the classroom.

## **LITERACY**

We now have three literacy initiatives deeply embedded in our school at Junior Cycle. They are

1.**STEP**- Speech, Tone, Eye, Contact and Pace programme which aims to build confidence in students speaking aloud in class. It has proven a very helpful tool for students to use as a checklist when preparing for and delivering orally communicated assessment like CBA's for Junior Cycle.

2. The second initiative is **COPS**-Capitalisation, Organisation of ideas, Punctuation and Spelling. This initiative has improved student writing across the curriculum. The COPS initiative has become a broadly embedded programme across subjects. It is particularly focused on first year English, and it remains references throughout the junior cycle. The COPS initiative is now part of the TY handbook for effective communication of their reflective work after major events.

3. Last year we introduced a new initiative **FEW**- Frequently Encountered Words. Our target was to increase the awareness and understanding of common verbs associated with tasks in Junior Cycle.

Post initiative data is still pending due to Covid-19 school closures. Data will be available early next term 2020/21 and made available.

## **NUMERACY**

This year our school focused on the initiative **Measurement:Time** This was to increase by 10% the number of students that can successfully a)Read time from an analog clock b)Convert from 12-hour to 24-hour clock and vice versa c)Extract information from a train timetable. All teachers were encouraged to use <https://classroomscreen.com/>, click on the clock icon to display both the analog and digital clock. All teachers were encouraged to engage in time-based activities where possible in their classes. Teachers of Maths and Science were asked to cover the topic of time measurement, timetables, speed etc as part of their lessons where appropriate. Teachers travelling to events/trips were encouraged to involve students in planning the trip, regarding departure time, length of journey, return time etc

- 75% (pre initiative) increase to 91% (post initiative) of students can correctly read the time from an analog clock
- 70% (pre initiative) increase to 92% of students (post initiative) can correctly convert from 24-hour clock to 12-hour clock.
- 63% (pre initiative) increase to 70% of students (post initiative) can successfully extract information from a train timetable.

## **Teaching and Learning -Effective Feedback**

Year 1 - 2017/2018 - Feedback strategies continue with a focus on the use of the visualiser.

Year 2 - 2018/2019 - Focus on embedding feedback strategies to improve academic attainment. Link to DEIS attainment and Partnership with Parents

Year 3 - 2019/20- Continued focus on embedding of feedback strategies and supporting parents with opportunities for feedback.

In year 1 We developed feedback strategies to improve attainment and support teaching and learning.

In year 2 We improved the awareness and understanding of feedback among our student cohort. Using student voice as a medium to improve and began to embed feedback in practice. We surveyed students in Years 1,2,5 & LCA to check their understanding of what feedback is and how it should be used. Results showed that **55 %** of students had a clear understanding of what feedback is while others felt they did not know how to use the feedback effectively to improve outcomes. To achieve this we put a simple explanatory sheet which was included in all student journals beginning September 2019. Student feedback also suggested the use of different types of feedback templates to suit different subjects. In response to this the group has designed a number of feedback templates for teachers. These will be distributed to teachers in Sept 2020.

In year 3 The DEIS 'Partnership with Parents' team has continued to work with parents creating an awareness of our feedback initiative. Samples of feedback along with opportunities for discussion have been provided at parent teacher meetings and parents council evenings. This year feedback was sought from parents regarding the accessibility of Vsware and establishing the most effective communication means to parents. Parents were surveyed. 220 parents responded, 38 % answered that they wanted more help to navigate Vsware. In terms of what the most effective communication

means for parents, there were 226 responses with 69% of parents choosing text messages as the most favourable means. Going forward The Partnership with Parents committee will now engage in addressing issues from the survey and educating the parents with the relevant information that they require. The following will be prioritised for 2020/21

1. Making short, to-the-point instructional videos with students for parents.
2. Using social media/journals to communicate with parents how to get login/change passwords etc
3. A number of demonstrations will be set up at parent teacher meetings to help parents navigate Vsware.

### **This is what we are going to work on**

To increase the take up of homework club for Junior Cycle students

A study pack will be given to 5th year students to increase awareness in relation to study methods and planning.

To Promote the importance of good attendance. We will target students on our Bronze level (Attendance Initiative) Those students have 5 + days absent (over an entire year). We want to bring a number of those students to Silver. Those on silver would be absent 2-4 days over an entire school year.

To increase the use of active Teaching & Learning in our methodologies in class.

To continue to embed effective feedback strategies to improve learner outcomes and experiences.

Student Voice will continue to be developed to encourage students to share their experiences, opinions and ideas about teaching & learning.

All teachers will be supported in ensuring that all students' needs are met through differentiation of lesson content and materials used.

### **This is what you can do to help**

Take an active interest in your son/daughter's learning.. Discuss how they are learning and what actions they will take with formative feedback given to them by their teachers.

Ensure that your son/daughter is on time for school and attends all classes daily.

Check your son/daughter's journal regularly.

Encourage your son/daughter to plan their own revision

Analyse term reports with your son/daughter and focus on areas for further improvement in each subject area.

Encourage reading for pleasure at home.

Overall, by showing an interest and commitment to your son/daughter's education you will enhance his/her self worth leading to his/her wellbeing.

**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**.

This year we had 167 school days, from August 2016 to June 2017. 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 6 parent/teacher meetings and 3 staff meetings, all in line with the Department's regulations.

### **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

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Ms. Karen Casey

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)

Ms. Máirín Lally

### **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 on:

20/03/18

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required.

YES

We encourage high attendance in the following ways: Attendance Strategy - DEIS Initiative. VsWare text alert to parents. DP punctuality monitor. Class teacher journal monitor.

This is how you can help: Ensure your son/daughter attends daily and is punctual.

### **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