



Tarbert Comprehensive School

TARBERT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

TARBERT CO. KERRY

81006S

**Summary School Improvement Plan for the School Community
Assessment for Learning**

Evaluation period: *September 2015 – June 2016*

Plan issue date: *June 2016*

Summary school improvement plan

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

As part of our ongoing work in the school, we conducted a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning. In this instance we evaluated Assessment for Learning. For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our Summary School Self-Evaluation Report which is available on this website.

This school improvement plan sets out the actions that we will undertake in the school over the next three years in Assessment for Learning. The main purpose of these actions is to improve our students' learning.

2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

2.1 Our school has **strengths** in the following areas:

Strengths

- At both Junior Cert and Leaving Cert level, the overall uptake of subjects at Higher Level exceeds the national average.
- Our uptake of subjects at HL, and results in the state exams compare favourably with national averages.
- The school's focus standardised tests demonstrates our commitment to ongoing development and improvement, specifically in monitoring progress in order to better guide and support individual students.
- Teachers currently assess students using a range of AfL and AoL strategies. Homework is set and monitored by teachers regularly, and along with formative and summative assessment, informs planning.
- Communication between the school and parents/primary caregivers is extensive and varied and presents opportunities to engage parents in their children's progress.
- Teachers are encouraged and willing to engage in extensive CPD around new and existing initiatives in education.
- Management and staff are committed to a whole school approach to school planning to improve quality of teaching and learning in the school, as demonstrated by our engagement in ongoing discussion and collaboration aimed at improving our practice and the experiences of students.
Improvements in digital infrastructure over recent years have enhanced teacher practice and learner engagement.

We have assessed these as our strengths because the MLL/WSE report on Tarbert Comprehensive, and subsequent subject inspection praised the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Students perform well at all levels in state exams. We communicate extensively with

parents/guardians through varied means such as journals, texts, newsletters, information evenings and via the school website. In this way we ensure that the school works in partnership with parents in the care and education of our students.

2.2 Our school has decided to prioritise the following areas of development:

Areas for development

- We aim to address the manner in which teachers communicate, and regularly return to, learning intentions, in order to improve learner engagement and understanding
- We acknowledge the strength of our systems in supporting those with learning difficulties, and intend that the SIP should aim to stretch **all** learners. We will use AfL strategies to address the needs of students at all levels, including those of higher ability.
- Linked to the above, and as a result of data gathered in the students' survey and focus groups, we will also concentrate on the area of *Sharing the Success Criteria*. The purpose of this will be to encourage students to be more focussed and on task in their learning, and more able to engage in reflection and self-evaluation.
- Over the course of the SIP teachers will explore ways of enhancing and varying the feedback given to students so as to provide individual targeted direction for improvement.
- Teachers will undertake CPD in the specific areas outlined in the plan, and in strategies that support AfL in the classroom
- Subject plans will be amended as required to include details of AfL practices to be undertaken by subjects

We have decided to prioritise these areas because we want to improve the percentage of teachers who clearly convey and return to learning intentions in class, and the percentage of students who recognise, understand and engage with these objectives. As teachers we also want to create explicit links for students between the feedback they receive and an agreed success criteria, in order that learners are more aware of and responsible for their own progress. We want to build on our good practice to date and encourage those of higher ability in our classes to achieve their potential by engaging in a level of self-evaluation and becoming more independent learners.

2.3 Our school has set the following targets for improvement which are related to pupils' achievement, and has identified the following actions which will help in achieving those targets over the next three years.

Targets for Improvement	Actions
Increase teacher awareness, understanding and use of AfL strategies to improve teaching and learning	CPD will be undertaken in AfL strategies and specifically in the areas of focus of the current SIP
	Awareness will be increased and reminders

given to teachers via our current VS Ware system and the Bright Ideas Board in the staffroom

We will increase from 61.5% the percentage of teachers *Sharing the Learning Intentions* at the beginning of a class or topic

Teachers will express learning intentions at the start of classes or topics, in a range of ways e.g. orally or on the board or overhead

We will increase from 31.7% the number of students who recognise and understand Learning Intentions as stated by teachers

Teachers will return to the learning intentions throughout the class and at the end to check student understanding, and to monitor the achievement of objectives

A range of AfL strategies will be employed to assess student understanding and progress in classes

We will increase from 51.3% the number of teachers responding that '*success criteria forms the basis for feedback*', and ensure that success criteria are linked to learning intentions

Teachers will share the success criteria with students prior to assessment. This will be done on a subject department basis, as what constitutes 'success criteria' and how students are assessed varies from subject to subject

We will create awareness among students of the relationship between the success criteria and their individual progress. Students will be encouraged to apply success criteria and feedback in such a way as to encourage self-evaluation

Teachers will take measures to ensure that feedback, in whatever form, is clearly linked to the learning objectives and success criteria, and includes directions for students on how they can improve their work and progress to the next level of success.

Where feedback is given orally to students we would encourage students to note this feedback for future reference

As a parent you can help us by being aware of the school's process of self-evaluation and the details of the School Improvement Plan. Parents can also support their children's development in all areas of learning by regularly accessing information on the school

website, in the school newsletter or at information evenings as appropriate, in order to keep abreast of the school's strategies..

2.4 We know we will have achieved our targets when:

- Teachers demonstrate knowledge of and use a range of AfL strategies to act as tools to measure student understanding of objectives on an ongoing basis
- Learning intentions are clearly expressed and students understand what they are learning
- Teachers report that students are on task, demonstrate engagement and are aware of the purpose and expected outcome of the lessons.
- Students of all abilities will be encouraged to reach their potential where the explicit linking of feedback to the success criteria will clarify how they might achieve the higher grades. Furthermore, the sharing of the success criteria will encourage students to reflect on their learning and engage in self-assessment