



Tarbert Comprehensive School
SELF-EVALUATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
PLAN SCHOOL COMMUNITY SUMMARY PROGRESS
REPORT JUNE 2022

During our School Self-Evaluation Process, based on *Looking at Our Schools 2016-2020*, we have evaluated teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well. This is what we discovered:

- ✓ Students are motivated to learn through having a clear sense of attainable and challenging learning outcomes
- ✓ Junior Cycle Students have attained proficiency in the prescribed key skills appropriate to their stage in the cycle
- ✓ Senior Cycle students have attained proficiency in the skills required for successful learning in the programmes they are following
- ✓ Students' achievements in summative assessments, including certificate examinations, is in line with or above expectations
- ✓ Students are able to work independently and collaboratively in a purposeful and productive manner
- ✓ Students contribute their opinions and experiences to class discussion with confidence. They are respectful of and interested in the opinions and experience of their classmates
- ✓ Teachers integrate relevant literacy and numeracy skills into the fabric of the lesson
- ✓ Teachers use formal meeting and planning time to reflect together on their work
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Teachers' plans identify clear relevant learning intentions

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

- We analysed our results from state Examinations
- We engaged in teacher discussion and feedback
- We surveyed parents, teachers, and students on various aspects of teaching and learning in the school
- We held focus group discussions based around certain areas of teaching and learning
- We assessed our strengths and needs using the statements of quality in 'Looking at Our Schools (SSE Guidelines) 2016-2020
- We assessed needs based on the Framework for the JCSP
- We assessed our needs based on the 'Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020'
- We implemented and included recommendations made in Subject Inspections, Inspectorate Advisory Visits and WSE Reports, and recent relevant publications and guidelines

This is what we are currently working on and some of our progress to date:

Blended Learning

While we have always been committed to integrating technology into teaching at the school, changes in past years due to Covid have resulted in the ongoing need for teachers to adapt their teaching styles and methods accordingly. Emphasis has been on students and teachers having the skills and knowledge associated with being engaged, literate, and responsible in the digital arena. These skills are essential not only for learning – as they are an important aspect of the JCSP – but for life, as students increasingly need to be cognisant of the responsibilities of digital citizenship. As a school we have focused on:

1. Implementing a whole school approach to how we manage classes and resources, using Google Classroom
2. Adopting a 'blended learning' approach to teaching and learning, incorporating digital elements in our

classroom teaching

Our aims in this area are:

1. Students are able to engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities and are confident in the use of Google Classroom, used to supplement in person teaching, and as a means for students to keep up with work regardless of any absences
2. The teacher selects and uses teaching approaches appropriate to students' learning needs, and to a blended learning model

Progress to date and Next Steps (June 2022):

Previous targets set in the area of blended learning have been met and are being maintained

- The design of relevant course content and skills continues to be at the centre of planning for computer classes - these have been developed for Junior students to include Digital Citizenship as part of the school's Wellbeing programme, as well as Coding in Third Year, with a new Responsible Research Module planned for Second Year's next year
- 93% of Third year students and 86.5% of LC2s report that Google Classroom was the main platform teachers used to share classroom resources and information relevant to their subject
- 97% of students surveyed consider themselves to be 'Confident' or 'Comfortable' in their ability to engage with digital teaching and learning and the Google Classroom platform
- Students are very positive about the accessibility and ease of use of Classroom, how all resources are in one place, how it allows absent students to catch up on classwork and homework, and how notifications of work due help them to plan their time
- We introduced digital learning mentors to help first years to negotiate Classroom on a variety of devices and the response to this was positive
- For the 2022/23 school year, we will add a page to the school journal to remind students of how to use various aspects of Google Classroom
- We will conduct specific research into how students learn differently using books, computers or phones, and look at the issues that occur when accessing from various devices, the results of which will inform future planning in the area
- We will redraft our mobile phone policy in light of recent changes to teaching and learning

Assessment for Learning

We continue to prioritise Assessment for Learning as the means of reinforcing the idea that students and teachers are partners in the learning process, and to encourage a culture of self-evaluation among students. Previous targets in this area have been reached.

Our aims in this area are:

1. To vary our means of providing feedback to students, incorporating oral and whole class feedback, along with traditional written feedback.
2. To 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

Progress to date and Next Steps (June 2022):

- 92% of students surveyed indicated that Success Criteria in various forms is the basis for teacher correction and feedback (this figure is the same as last year)
- Students indicate that teachers provide feedback on their work in a variety of ways
- 98.2% of Third years and 96.6% of Lc2s surveyed indicated that they have been given targeted feedback

signposting next steps for improvement on return of assessments, comparing to 72% of LC2 students last year

- Our current focus is in the area of student self-evaluation - supporting students in being able to recognise the relationship between using success criteria, applying feedback, and improved outcomes. This year over 28% of LC2s and over 33% of Third years reported they could evaluate their own work to improve outcomes. This represents an increase on last year, and we aim to build on this in the coming years

Leadership and Student Voice

Management in Tarbert actively encourages leadership in many ways - through teacher participation in CPD in the sharing of new learning as part of our culture of collaboration and innovation. We do this in various ways including sharing best practice online and at staff meetings. We also encourage student leadership and involvement in various ways in the school, through our Mentoring programme, Gaisce, student involvement in school teams, Student Council among other activities.

Our aims in this area are:

1. That teachers contribute to building whole staff capacity by sharing their expertise
2. To promote and facilitate the development of student voice, student participation, and student leadership

Progress to date and Next Steps (June 2022):

- Teachers share their expertise in many ways including at school staff meetings
- Last year we extended our student mentoring programme to include Digital Mentors in line with our blended learning targets
- We have made moves to include student voice more in the development of our open survey questions, and in developing student focus groups
- Our current focus will develop these ideas and include an extension of the Teaching and Learning Team to include students and a new student suggestion box as requested by the students this year

This is what you can do to help:

Support the school's digital strategies - encourage your child to engage fully with our learning platform and the digital resources suggested by or created by teachers

Lead by example by downloading the school VSWare App in order to submit absences and check your child's progress

Encourage your child to take responsibility for their learning and their progress. Engage them in conversation about their learning and encourage them to reflect on areas for improvement

Encourage your child to 'get involved' in school life, to take an active role in their learning and in their experiences in the school

Respond to any request from the school for feedback in the form of surveys, focus groups or other means of gathering information. We are partners in your child's education and your voice is important in informing future planning in the school.

Here is some information about how we are conducting 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**.

Our school year this year was from 27/08/20 to 03/06/22. 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 all such meetings were facilitated or adapted according to DES procedure and Covid 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

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mr. Richard Prendiville**, and our Deputy DLP is **Ms. Leila Moloney**

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: March 2020 We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. YES

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