

## OUR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2019



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

For the academic year 2017-2018 we chose the area of Learner Experience from the framework document *Looking At Our Schools, 2016*. We focused on the objective: *“Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning.”* The Teaching and Learning Committee worked hard to promote Assessment for Learning (AFL) methodologies, as distinct from Assessment of Learning. This is an approach which is known to improve learner outcomes and increase learner confidence and autonomy. The particular methodologies we focused on were KWL (What I Know, Want To Know, Learn), Placemat (a template for effective group work) and Success Criteria.

Staff and students were surveyed in May 2018 to assess the impact.

- A survey of 1st, 2nd and 5th Year students showed that 33% of 1st Years felt that self-directed research helped their learning (compared with only 8.5% of 2nd and 5th Years).
- Junior Cycle students demonstrated an understanding of terms and methodologies such as KWL and Placemat.
- A staff survey in May 2018 showed that 58% of staff felt that 1st Years had a greater sense of ownership of their work. 52.7% felt that 2nd Years had a greater ownership of their work.
- 55.7% of staff felt that 1st Years now take greater responsibility for improving their own work and 44% felt that 2nd Years do same.
- 89% of staff reported using more varied approaches to assessing student work.
- Staff reported the benefits of collaboration.
- November (Midterm) reports are still largely summative in nature.

Overall strengths of our school as supported by the data

- AFL methodologies are now regularly in use in classrooms and becoming embedded in the teaching and learning culture of Our Lady's.
- We enjoy high student engagement.
- We have positive staff-student relationships.
- Staff are open to greater student participation through varying teaching methodologies.
- Our school continues to rank above national average in participation and attainment in state exams.

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

- Staff surveys.
- Staff consultation.
- Student surveys and focus groups.
- Review of minutes from subject departments.
- Consultation with parents through a Parents Focus Group.
- Collation and analysis of results.

**This is what we are now going to work on:**

Our next objective is to further develop this good practice and build on the work done to date by focusing on a specific pillar of Assessment for Learning: the teacher practice of formative feedback.

***Formative feedback is feedback given by a teacher that contains three core elements: acknowledgement of what a student has achieved in a subject or piece of work, what the desired goal is, and steps to bridge the gap between the two.***

**Guiding framework:** *Looking at our School: Domain 4: Teachers' Collective / Collaborative Practice.*

**The Standard:** *"Teachers collectively develop and implement consistent and dependable formative and summative assessment practices".*

- Staff will focus on the practice of formative feedback in the context of Assessment for Learning to assist moving this standard from Effective to Highly Effective Practice.
- The Our Lady's Midterm Progress Reports will reflect the focus on formative feedback by concentrating on achievement to date, effort and steps for improvement for all students in every subject.
- The Leader of SSE will support the Education Committee in promoting formative feedback as a pillar of Assessment for Learning to the staff throughout the year.
- Staff will be provided with resources and opportunities for sharing practice on formative feedback.
- Departmental collaboration will be encouraged using online sharing platforms.
- Regular *teachmeets* (meetings of teachers to share pedagogical practice and methodologies) will be held to promote best practice and techniques among staff.
- Ongoing staff professional development through attending workshops and seminars.
- All departments to have the opportunity to engage in classroom observation to further enhance collaboration and sharing of best practice.
- We will regularly get feedback from the students so as to measure the impact of the above and ensure responsiveness to student needs.
- We will engage with parents / guardians in this process through a parent focus group, to gather feedback and access the parents' voice.
- The Board of Management, the Senior Management Team, the Leader of SSE and the Education Committee will set specific targets.

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

- Join the Parent Focus Group (email: [focusgroup@olschool.ie](mailto:focusgroup@olschool.ie))
- Browse the material available on the school website explaining School Self Evaluation, Assessment for Learning, Formative Feedback and other terms surrounding best practice in education.
- Read your daughter's Midterm report and discuss it with her
- Encourage your daughter to pay particular attention to the formative feedback she is receiving from teachers. Your daughter should be clear on where she is achieving in a subject and what are the steps she should take to reach her full potential.
- Discuss the concepts of AFL and formative feedback with your daughter and remind her that AFL is a very effective learning approach that compliments summative assessment (end of unit exams and grades).
- Remind your daughter to reflect regularly on her learning and to note areas for improvement on each unit of work she is studying.
- Encourage your daughter to take greater ownership and responsibility for her learning.
- Encourage your daughter to plan her own revision, to set targets, and to track her own progress.
- Ensure that your daughter fills in her journal for every subject each night also noting study that she will do.

**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**.

The Department sets out a **standardised school year and school holidays**.

This year we took all our school holidays within the permitted time. **YES / NO**

The Department sets out arrangements for parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings. This year we had all parent/teacher meetings and all staff meetings, 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 / NO**

All teachers know about the Procedures and we have told all parents about them and how we follow them. **YES / NO**

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Marguerite Gorby.

Our Deputy DLP is Stephen Rhatigan.

### ***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 / NO**

We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy on: Sept 2017.

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. **YES / NO**

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

- Certificates and Awards at the end of the year
- Assisting students to feel a connection with the school community
- Pastoral care system which encourages and monitors attendance

This is how you can help:

- Encouraging full attendance in school where possible.
- Ensuring that notes are sent to school if a student is absent.

### ***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 / NO**

Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. **YES / NO**

We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school. **YES / NO**