



Coláiste Pobail Ghleann Maghair
Glanmire Community College

School Self-Evaluation Report **2017-2019**

Report issue date: *May 2020*

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

1. Introduction

This document provides a brief overview of the School Self-Evaluation process in Glanmire Community College and provides a record of the outcomes of our last improvement plan 2017-2019. This document also provides an overview of our current improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet these targets.

Professional reflection through the school self-evaluation (SSE) process is central to the work of our school. In Glanmire Community College, SSE is viewed as a multi-faceted and inter-dependent process. Underpinning our SSE process is a recognition that students' engagement and learning is supported by strong and coherent professional practices¹. School improvement is driven through a culture of collaboration, building our collective professional capacity and a focus on evidence-based instructional practices² that support high quality learning outcomes.

A whole school review was undertaken in 2018-2019 of all aspects of school life in GCC. The areas of focus included Leadership and Management, School Culture and Teaching and Learning (see Figure 1 below). A three year plan was developed, which now provides the over-arching framework to guide our school self-evaluation process³.

Our SSE process involves regularly consulting with our key stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, support staff and our community) to identify what we are doing well and also to identify areas that we can improve upon. We gather qualitative and quantitative evidence from several sources to determine baseline data for each area identified for improvement. A number of initiatives and projects have arisen from the evidence we have collated, which have made, and/or continue to make, a positive impact on students' learning experience, teachers' professional practice and overall learning outcomes. Core to our SSE process is the need to ensure all of our efforts support a thriving learning community that achieves high quality results.

Each year we aim to build upon the work that has taken place previously. In this way we evolve our professional capacity, knowledge and skills to continue to have the best possible impact on learning. Figure 2 provides an overview of the various inter-related elements of the ongoing SSE process in Glanmire Community College, which focus on the Quality of Leadership and Management, the Quality of Students' Learning Experiences and Learning Outcomes and on the Quality of Teachers' Professional Practice, in line with Looking at Our School 2016 (LAOS)⁴.

¹Fullan, M., Quinn, J., (2016) *Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Districts, and Systems*. Sage Publications 2016.

²Hattie, J., (2012) *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*. Routledge

³ Glanmire Community College Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

⁴Inspectorate (2016), *Looking at Our School 2016: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools*. Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough St, Dublin 1.

Figure 1: Extract from GCC Strategic Planning Framework 2019-2022 – Key Outcome Statements



11. Strategic Framework : What we will be able to say in 2022:



1. School Culture

"In Glanmire Community College, students, staff and parents work together to ensure our school is a welcoming, safe and inclusive place for learning, founded on positive relationships, effective communication and shared responsibility."



2. Teaching & Learning

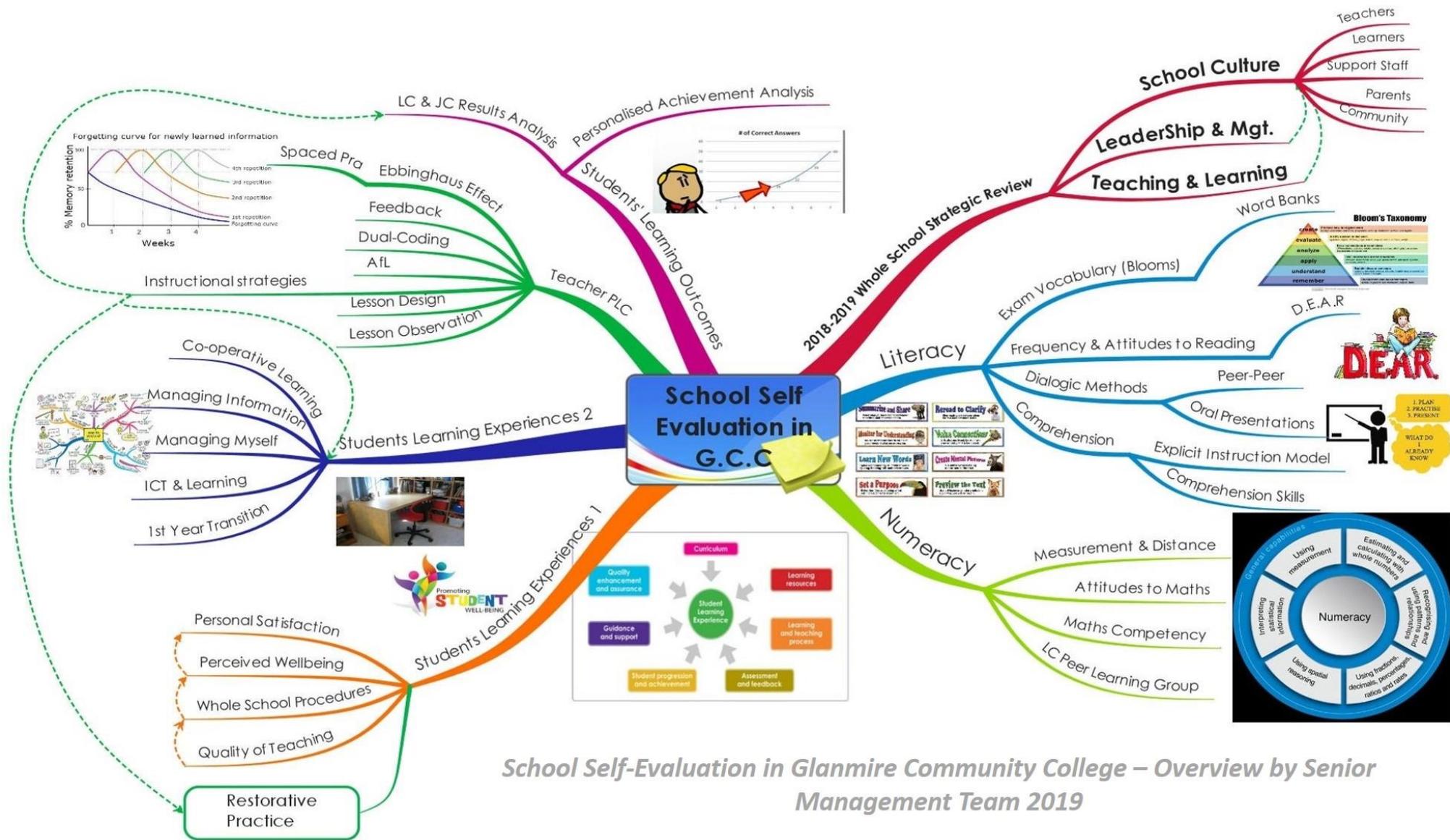
"Glanmire Community College is recognised for achieving high quality learning outcomes through excellence in teaching and supporting the continuous development of our staff, students and management"



3. Leadership & Management

"The highly effective structures, policies and practices in Glanmire Community College promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching, and assessment"

Figure 2: An Overview of Focus Areas of School Self-Evaluation in Glanmire Community College



School Self-Evaluation in Glanmire Community College – Overview by Senior Management Team 2019

1.1 Outcomes of our SSE improvement plan from September 2014 to May 2017

Literacy Focus

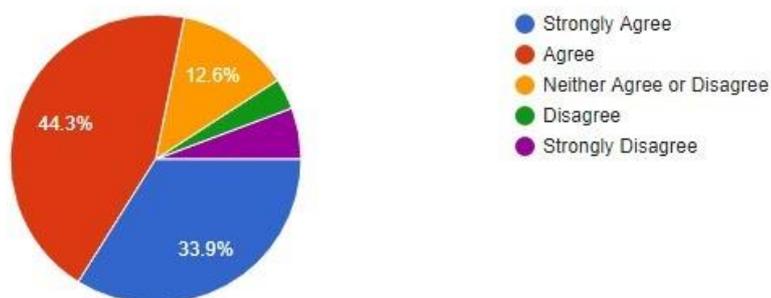
- Engaging with written text has been a focus of our Literacy development plan. A number of initiatives were put in place, including a weekly Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.) initiative, poetry and essay competitions, as well as celebrating World Book Day. Prior to and following these initiatives, students were asked about the frequency of their reading habits and their attitudes towards themselves as readers and consumers of information/text. As a result of the D.E.A.R. initiative and the active promotion of independent reading time during 1st year classes:
 - There was a 17% increase in the number of students who reported reading more occasionally. The majority of this improvement came from a cohort of students who previously reported that they did not engage with reading for pleasure.
 - 11% more students reported that they feel more competent as readers as a result of D.E.A.R.

Learning and Teaching Focus

- An ongoing focus of our SSE process to date has been on developing students' oral communication and comprehension skills. This necessitated teachers to reflect on, and to adopt, a range of dialogic methods and explicit instruction in the classroom. The majority of students have engaged positively with these approaches when used.
 - 78% of students surveyed reported that they like working with classmate(s) to discuss a topic or to complete a task

Figure 3: Student feedback about working in groups

I like working in groups with my classmates

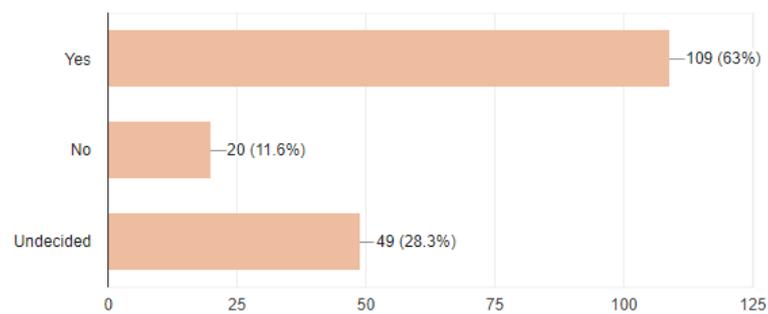


- 63% of students surveyed agreed that groupwork was helpful to their learning. A further 28% were undecided.

Figure 4: Student feedback about the impact of working in groups on their learning

. Do you feel groupwork is helpful to your learning

responses



- Almost 75% of students surveyed agreed that they would like to get more regular opportunities to express their thoughts and opinions in class.

Comprehension strategies were also introduced at a whole school level through provision of input at staff meetings.

Based on this feedback a follow up initiative to promote greater dialogic methods and learner voice will be explored during the next phase of our SSE process (2020-2023). This exploration will take account of students' feedback about their experiences of dialogic methods, including the frequency of opportunity, the quality of the group task and the impact of these approaches on academic engagement and achievement.

1.2 The focus of this evaluation 2017-2019

A "Learning to Learn" initiative was introduced in September 2017 for our incoming first-year cohort. This initiative arose as a result of feedback from parents and some teachers who suggested that some students required additional supports with the transition from Primary school to Post-Primary School. Most class teachers reported that the majority of students would benefit from a specific intervention in learning to manage their books, equipment and lockers to become more independent learners. A focus group of students reported that they would benefit from more support in learning how to study. Students reported that many of their peers found the increase in the volume of information, and the diverse range of subjects and teaching approaches, to be more challenging when compared to their experiences in primary school.

Based on this feedback, for the period September 2017 to May 2019 our SSE explicitly focused on the development of two Key Skills of Junior Cycle:

Figure 5. Explicit SSE focus on Junior Cycle Key Skills



- **Managing Myself:** This aspect focused on providing a “Learning to Learn” workshop for students and their parents.
- **Managing Information:** This aspect focused on supporting students to record their learning to support long-term memory and information retrieval.
- In November 2017, we invited each 1st year student and one of their parents to attend a workshop in the school. This workshop highlighted effective learning strategies and identified the elements of a positive homework and study environment to support students’ learning. The primary focus of this approach was to highlight the importance of parental support and guidance for young students as they grow and develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning.
 - The vast majority of parents reported that the Learning to Learn workshop was informative and they were confident of implementing some of the practical steps to further support their child’s learning.
 - 78% of students found the Learning to Learn workshop, along with the subsequent support from their class teachers, beneficial and were confident they would implement some practical steps to further improve their homework and study practices.
- In January 2018, Mind-Mapping as one form of a graphic organiser was introduced to support students’ ability to make notes in a creative way. This evidence-based strategy is founded on the work of Allan Paivio (Dual-Coding Theory)⁵ and Tony Buzan^{6,7}.
- The purpose of this initiative was to help students learn to manage information, to think critically and to creatively construct their knowledge of topics in a way that enhances memory, retention and recall. **Note making** requires students to engage at a much deeper cognitive level with the concepts and materials being studied. In contrast, note taking can often be completed with low cognitive engagement with the text. Using graphic organisers has also been shown to

⁵Clark, J.M., & Paivio, A., (1991), Dual Coding Theory and Education; *Educational Psychology Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3

⁶Tee, T.K., et. al. (2014), Buzan Mind Mapping: An Efficient Technique for Note-Taking, *International Journal of Social, Human Science and Engineering* Vol:8 No:1 pp 28-31

⁷Goodnough, K., & Long, R., (2002), ‘Mind Mapping: A Graphic Organizer for the Pedagogical Toolbox’. *Science Scope*, Vol: 25 No: 8 pp 20-24

be an effective means of capturing relevant information in an abbreviated format, which supports greater retention and more accurate recall of this information at a later date^{8,9}.

- The skills involved in creating mind-maps have been shown to be transferable across many areas of the curriculum¹⁰.
- It was decided that the most effective means of introducing students to the skills of mind-mapping was through a core subject. All first-year students study Geography, which lends itself well to mind-mapping.
- All seven first-year geography teachers willingly participated in the initiative. The approach involved these teachers reflecting and revising their practice to incorporate more “note-making” and less “note-taking”. These teachers attended a workshop on mind-mapping and were provided with some samples and ongoing mentoring, if/when required, to support their work.
- The students learned and practiced the skills of mind mapping with their geography teachers over the course of an initial eight-week intervention.

2. Findings

- Representatives of the Geography teachers presented the findings of their experience to the full teaching staff. These teachers reported a significant improvement in the quality of student engagement in their classes. They also presented the results of class tests, both before the introduction of the mind-mapping intervention and after its introduction. The results showed that a majority of students significantly improved their grades in class tests.

Figure 6: Representative Sample of findings from Geography Department Results

- Learners of all ability benefitted
- Weaker students **results** rose **dramatically**
- Weaker students **confidence** has increased

Mind-Maps Introduced by Geog. Dept. January 2018

	October	November	Christmas Exam	January	March
MC 1	25%	42%	38%	69%	88%
AB 2	28%	55%	50%	60%	75%
RS 3	13%	07%	06%	Abs	38%
WS 4	45%	66%	71%	Abs	81%
CG 5	54%	63%	60%	76%	100%
AF 6	90%	92%	97%	85%	100%
AC 7	98%	87%	77%	91%	75%

⁸ Stull, A. T., & Mayer, R. E. (2007). Learning by doing versus learning by viewing: Three experimental comparisons of learner-generated versus author-provided graphic organizers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol: 99 No: 4, pp 808-812*

⁹ Griffin, C. C., & Tulbert, B. L. (1995). The effect of graphic organizers on students' comprehension and recall of expository texts. *Reading and Writing Quarterly, Vol: 11, pp 73-89.*

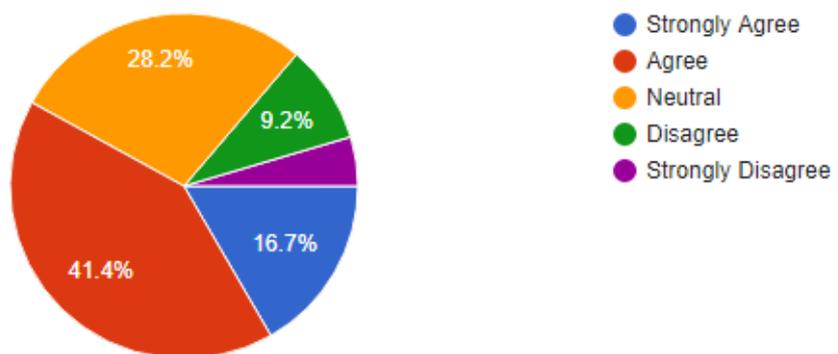
¹⁰ Egan, M., (1999). Reflections on effective use of graphic organizers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, Vol: 42 pp 641-645*

- A focus group of students was selected to give feedback on their experiences of working with mind-maps as a learning and revision tool. The feedback was video recorded and shared with all staff. These students were universally positive about the impact of mind-maps on their motivation to learn and as an effective revision tool in preparation for assessment.
- A follow up survey was conducted of the first year student cohort (n=174): 58% of students strongly agreed or agreed that mind-maps is a useful learning tool. (Less than 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed).

Figure 7: Student feedback on using mind maps as a tool to support their learning.

10. I feel mind-mapping is a useful tool to help me learn

174 responses



2.1 This is very effective practice in our school

- The vast majority of the students reported that they enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn, and expect to achieve as learners.
- The vast majority of the students reported that they are engaged purposefully in meaningful learning activities.
- The vast majority of teachers involved in the mind-mapping initiative and also in the peer-learning initiative reported that they valued the opportunity for professional development and professional collaboration.
- The vast majority of teachers express confidence that they have the requisite subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills to further develop specific evidence-based learning strategies.
- Most teachers are willing to contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise.

Figure 8: Feedback to whole-staff on experiences of the impact of mind-mapping initiative on learning.

Teachers Feedback

- Positive
- Structure / Framework still required
- Students are more engaged in class
- Student results improved at all levels
- Taking less time to complete now
- Affirming for the students
- Student confidence is growing
- Seeing possibilities - e.g. Link with Computer Teachers



2.2. This is how we know

- Feedback received from our 1st Year Parents' Survey.
- Evidence from our Learning-to-Learn Initiative surveys and feedback from our focus group interviews.
- Feedback from our annual graduating students "Exit Survey", where over almost 90% of students reported they were proud to be a student of GCC and over 85% were happy with the quality of education they had received in GCC.
- Review of students' academic achievements, relative to their cognitive ability, in house and state examinations. These results indicate that over 30% of students in each year group achieve above expected outcomes relative to cognitive ability.
- Feedback from our teachers, through our Learning-to-Learn Initiative, Peer Learning Initiative and at staff meetings.

2.3 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further

We have identified a number of key areas for ongoing development as part of our SSE process. These initiatives impact the quality of students' learning experiences, teachers' professional practices, the quality of management and leadership and the quality of students' learning outcomes.

- We will continue to expand our Learning to Learn Initiative.
 - Our 1st year History teachers will become the core subject to introduce mind-mapping to the next incoming first-year cohort.
 - Our 1st year computer teachers will support students to make their mind-maps electronically
 - Our second-year Geography teachers will extend the use of co-operative learning strategies to build on their experiences of working collaboratively through the mind-mapping initiative.
- We will continue to implement and consolidate our approaches to enhancing students' literacy skills, by continuing our existing focus on vocabulary, comprehension and oral communication.
- We will build on initial developments to support students' numeracy skills. We will develop and implement a Maths Competency Test with incoming first year students. This will aim to identify

common areas of strength and common areas for development. We will explore ways to support students' numeracy development through a cross-curricular integration of concepts that focus on improving identified common areas for development.

- We acknowledge that positive relationships are key to the wellbeing of our community. We also acknowledge that at times inappropriate behaviours can impact negatively on relationships between students and between students and their teachers. We will focus on building our capacity to address relationship issues in a restorative manner. We will introduce whole-school training in collaboration with Restorative Practice Ireland.
- We will build on our professional capacity to interpret and use assessment data as a tool to inform our instructional practice. We will continue to develop our tracking and monitoring tools to support positive learning experiences for each student, whilst understanding the factors impacting on their learning outcomes.

3. Our improvement plan

On the next page we have recorded:

- The **targets** for improvement we have set
- The **actions** we will implement to achieve these
- **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan
- How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes** (criteria for success)

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:

- The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- **Achievement of targets** (original and modified), and **when**

Our Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this improvement plan is from September 2019 to May 2021

1. JC Key Skills – Managing Information - Note Making – Dual Coding

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
<p>To ensure 100% of all 1st years receive instruction in how to construct and use a graphic organiser as a note-making tool (mind-mapping)</p> <p>Increase by 5% overall the number of students who agree or strongly agree that note-making is beneficial to their learning. (Applying principles of Dual Coding)</p>	<p>Introduce Mind-mapping as a note-making tool in all 1st Year History classes</p> <p>Support students with the digital literacy skills to use MS PowerPoint to produce electronic mind-maps using SmartDraw function</p>	<p>JC Coordinator & SSE Coordinator & Deputy principal</p> <p>1st year History teachers</p> <p>1st Year Computer teachers.</p>	<p>All students can produce a mind map as a memory aid.</p> <p>Most (>75%) of 1st Year students will produce a mind map including all the necessary elements (colour, key word association, image)</p> <p>Some students will produce mind-maps that can act as a resource for others (exemplars)</p>	<p>Review in December 2019 and April 2020</p>	<p>1st Year History Teachers have participated workshop and have begun to introduce Mind-Mapping to all of their 1st Year Students</p>

2. Learner Voice - Quality of Students Learning Experiences – Teachers professional practice – Learner Voice

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
<p>To increase by 12% the number of students who report that they almost always (>3 classes per day) or often (1-3 classes per day) have opportunities to work co-operatively in their classes.</p>	<p>Explore evidence-based cooperative learning strategies (2-3) to be implemented with 2nd year cohort 2020_2021.</p> <p>Review the impact of the initial pilot phase of the Student Voice project and share with whole-staff.</p> <p>Support teachers with relevant opportunities to further develop their professional skills through the provision of focused workshops</p>	<p>Student Voice Project Teachers, SSE Coordinator. Principal & Deputy principal</p> <p>Student Voice Project Teachers.</p> <p>Peer-Learning Initiative teachers to facilitate lesson observations and/or workshops for colleagues, where relevant</p>	<p>A 12% overall increase of students reporting greater opportunities to learn cooperatively in lessons.</p>	<p>Review progress in May 2020 and December 2020.</p>	

3. Numeracy development

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
<p>To establish baseline data on our current first years on their Mathematical competencies and their attitudes to learning in Maths</p>	<p>Implement, grade and analyse standard Maths competency test</p> <p>Identify common areas for development within the 1st yr cohort and devise appropriate intervention(s)</p>	<p>1st Yr Maths co-ordinator & SSE Coordinator</p> <p>All 1stYr Maths Teachers & SSE Coordinator support by all subject teachers, where relevant</p>	<p>Completed Maths Competency test</p> <p>Identified and prioritised common areas for development</p>	<p>Review January 2020</p> <p>Review in April 2020</p>	<p>Competency assessment administered. Preliminary results collated February 2020</p>
<p>Establish Specific Maths comparative competency index, based on Quantitative reasoning and Maths STEN results from CAT4 standardised assessments and data from Primary School.</p>	<p>Review students' academic performance in maths term assessments and produce performance indexes for future comparisons</p>	<p>Deputy Principal & Maths Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Valid Maths index established</p>	<p>Review June 2020</p>	

4. Restorative Practice - Students Learning Experiences – Teachers Professional Practice – Positive Relationships and Behaviour Management

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
To Increase from 10 to 30 the number of teachers provided with training in Restorative Practice	Restorative practice Training programme to be offered to all staff and provided by Restorative Practice Ireland. Teachers trained in Restorative practice to apply the RP approach when resolving behavioural issues.	Principal and Pat O'Mahony RP Practitioner and RP team coordinator. All RP teachers	School funding to be approved by Board of Management to provide this training. Uptake of training by additional 20 teachers A tangible increase in the use of RP language in day to day interactions.	Two workshops (X 2 cohorts) provided for additional 25 teachers to train with RP Ireland	39 teachers and members of senior management trained in RP.
To increase by a further 10% overall the number of students who agree or strongly agree that students are treated fairly in the school	Repeat Graduation "Exit Survey" and Survey 2 nd Years to determine feedback	Deputy Principal to organise, implement and analyse data.	Access to RP material in the Staff room Increase of 10% in the overall number of students who agree that students are treated fairly in school		

5. Literacy - Figure 9: Example of Classroom Display poster to support continuity of Literacy development strategies focusing on Comprehension and Exam-specific vocabulary to promote Higher Order Thinking – (Also Further explore pre-teaching Tier 2 & Tier 3 vocabulary)

Junior Cycle Assessments

Classroom Based Assessment (C.B.A) Grading System – project based
Assessed by Teacher using Features of Quality

- Exceptional
- Above Expectations
- In line with Expectations
- Yet to meet Expectations

Assessment Task (A.T) – worth 10% - written response
Assessed by State Exams Commission
*some subjects WILL NOT complete an A.T; instead will complete a practical component

Summative Assessment (S.A) Grading System – written exam:
Assessed by State Exams Commission

- Distinction (90-100%)
- Higher Merit (75-90%)
- Merit (55-75%)
- Achieved (40-55%)
- Partially Achieved (20-40%)
- Not Graded (0-20%)

Comprehension Strategies... POW!

The Super Six...

Make Connections
Connect what you read to what you already know...

Predict
What is going to happen next?

Question
Ask questions to help you understand

Monitor
Determine the importance of the information you are learning

Visualise
Create pictures to help deepen understanding

Summarise
Sum up your learning in your own words

Feedback Formula

Self | Peer | Teacher Evaluation

T – TELL: Identify +/-/improvement

A – ASK: What they learned/enjoyed

G – GIVE: A complement/target

What went well?

What didn't go so well?

Areas to improve

How to improve

Target for next time

Let Your Mind Bloom...

Higher Order Thinking Skills

Create	Create Invent Compose Plan Construct Design
Evaluate	Judge Select Choose Decide Justify Debate Verify
Analyse	Distinguish Examine Compare Contrast Investigate
Apply	Solve Show Use Illustrate Construct Complete
Comprehension	Explain Describe Outline Discuss Distinguish Predict
Remember	Tell List Describe Relate Locate Write Find State

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 [INSERT Correct Number] school days*, from 28 August 2018 to 31 May 2019. Our school week is 28 hours tuition in the curriculum.

*We lost ----- school days as a result of hazardous weather events and national warnings. We were unable to recover all of the days lost, however we adjusted our scheduled meetings to ensure we made up some time.

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 **six** parent/pupil/teacher meetings and [INSERT Correct Number] 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
- Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is: Mr Ronan McCarthy (Principal)
- Our Deputy DLPs are: Ms Gertie Cahill (Deputy Principal)
Mr Seamus Kennefick (Deputy Principal)
Mr Seánie McGrath (Deputy Principal)

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: [INSERT Correct Date]

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

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

- Assigned morning registration with class tutors. Promote accurate recording of daily and lesson attendance on our School Management Information System (VSWare).
- Weekly assemblies promoting the benefits of attendance and punctuality.
- Éacht for effort and positive contribution in school.

- Additional support (learning support, personal counselling) for students with additional needs, such as anxiety about school/subjects/social setting.
- Subject teachers & class teachers monitoring of attendance and punctuality patterns.
- Discussion of concerns at weekly pastoral care team meetings
- Staff bulletins highlighting students in need of care and monitoring
- Communication (explained absences) through the student journal
- Phone calls to parents and letters of concern
- Informing the Educational Welfare Officer

This is how parents can help:

- Establish a regular night time routine. Check homework, sign homework journal and ensure your son/daughter is well organised for school for the following morning. This alleviates much anxiety and sets your child up in a positive way for the day ahead.
- Establish a good morning routine, allowing ample time for hygiene, breakfast and travelling to school.
- Please inform the school of any absences, with a note of explanation
- Please avoid making appointments (e.g. dental/medical) during school hours insofar as possible.
- Please adhere to the standardised school year when booking family vacations

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

Policy Ratification

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

Signed: (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date:

Review Year: