**School Self-Evaluation Summary Report – 2019/20**

In the 1st cycle of SSE St. Ailbe’s concentrated on Literacy, Numeracy and the use of the school journal. For the 2nd cycle of SSE the school decided to continue with these themes and to improve educational attainment and improve organisation and delivery of SEN. It is recognised that these SSE themes are inextricably linked to DEIS planning and the implementation of the DEIS plan under the headings: Educational Attainment, Literacy, Numeracy, Retention, Transition, Attendance and External Links. St. Ailbe’s uses a range of information sources to guide the school through the process of self-evaluation. These sources include parent, student and staff surveys, oral feedback from students, record-keeping, state exam results etc. The following is a summary of progress to date in the 2nd cycle. The 3rd cycle of SSE was due to commence in the 2020/21 academic year however a recent circular has advised that the coming year can be used to complete any outstanding work from the 2nd cycle. The overriding issue in the 2019/20 was the school closure due to Covid-19. The following report gives a flavour of how St. Ailbe’s responded to the situation. It is important that as a school community we evaluate our responses to the school closure to help us plan for any similar situation in the future and to this end the results of a staff survey carried out in early June are included here. Also included is the school plan for the promotion of school-wide wellbeing following our return to school.

**Subject Department Self-Evaluation:**

The staff carried out the annual analysis of, and reflection on, Leaving Certificate results in September 2019. This included a comparison with national results and was used to assist with planning for the next academic year.

An analysis of Junior Certificate results was undertaken by departmental teams in October.

**Middle Management Self-Evaluation:**

In order to assist with SSE and DEIS planning a weekly meeting of management and year heads was timetabled. Emphasis at these meetings was placed on developmental issues as opposed to management/disciplinary issues.

Tipperary ETB provided ongoing training and support for St. Ailbe’s through the mediation of Dr. Joe O’Connell. Joe attended for two training sessions with senior management and also provided a whole staff session.

Following consultation with Joe O' Connell, Assessment For Learning (AFL)will be one of the main areas of focus for the 3rd SSE cycle. Teacher feedback on the following five areas below was sought over the school closure period.

1. Learning Outcomes
2. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
3. Effective Questioning
4. Formative Feedback
5. ​Students reflecting on their own Learning

The information has been collated and further work will be carried out in the 2020/21 school year.

**Home School Liaison Evaluation:**

* **Paired Reading with the Active Retirement Group**

Paired Reading is a short-term reading intervention programme with readers who lack fluency. Paired reading is about introducing students to learning in a very pleasurable way. We were very grateful to members of the Tipperary Active Retirement Group. Both the students and the Active Retirement members thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The programme in January and we were able to get six classes under way before the school closure due to Covid-19.

* **Maths for Parents**

Based on testing carried out by the Numeracy and Literacy Team it was established that 1st and 2nd year students were experiencing difficulties with particular topics from the Maths syllabus. We felt that if parents had a better understanding of these topics it would enable parents to provide their son/daughter with greater support when covering the topics in question. We had six parents who expressed an interest and took part in the class. The classes ran for eight weeks.

* **One Book, One Community**

One Book One Community is a community-reading project that takes place ever year in St Ailbe’s in conjunction with HSCL and the Literacy team. As part of One Book, One Community projects, 1st year students and their families are encouraged to read and discuss a particular book, ‘Skyhawk’ along with supporting activities held in schools. To mark the successful completion of the novel all parents/guardians were invited to a 1st year celebration where students read passages from the novel and gave musical performances.

* **Parent Teacher Meetings**

Attendance at P/T meetings is an area that HSCL has been tracking and recording over the past 3 years. Attendance has improved, with an average of 75% attendance within certain class groups> However there are still areas that need work. With this in mind we have changed some of our DEIS targets to concentrate on particular year groups as we have found the attendance at 5th and 2nd year P/T meeting is lower than other years. Our target is to reduce by 30% the number of Parents/Guardians not attending 5th year and 2nd year P/T meetings. LCA P/T meeting attendance has improved as we have moved away from the traditional P/T meeting in the evening with parents/guardians invited to attend an individual time allocated meeting during the day in consultation with the parents/guardians. We have set at target of 100% attendance for these meetings in the coming year.

* **School Meals**

The HSCL and the School Competition staff took on the responsibility for the organisation of the school meals delivery during the school closure. From the start of March to the end of May food parcels were delivered each week to approximately 80 families. Each parcel consisted of a variety of food products such as bread, fruit, milk, breakfast cereal, cheese, ham and pasta.

* **Other initiatives which were implemented this year by HSCL were:**
	+ CAO and After School Options Night
	+ Subject Options Night
	+ Parents/guardians of seven students availed of the assistance of HSCL and the ASD department to make successful HEAR and DARE Applications.

**Referrals & Suspensions:**

* Discipline issues continue to be monitored by tracking the numbers of suspensions and referral forms issued during the year. Targets are set each year. Results are given below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of suspensions** |
| 2020/21 | Target 20 |
| 2019/20 | 12 (target 20) (12/03/20 closure) |
| 2018/19 | 21 (target 25) |
| 2017/18 | 32 |
| 2016/17 | 38 |
| 2015/16 | 43 |
|  |  |
| **Year** | **Number of referral forms** |
| 2020/21 | Target 100 |
| 2019/20 | 65 (target 100) |
| 2018/19 | 105 (target 120) |
| 2017/18 | 137 (target 150) |
| 2016/17 | 178 (target 200) |
| 2015/16 | 256 |

* Referral forms issued by year group:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th, 5th & 6th** | **Total** | **% 2015/16** |
| **2015/16** | 80 | 48 | 83 | 74 | 285 | 100% |
| **2016/17** | 10 | 96 | 21 | 51 | 178 | 62% |
| **2017/18** | 16 | 21 | 84 | 16 | 137 | 48% |
| **2018/19** | 11 | 49 | 20 | 26 | 105 | 37% |
| **2019/20** | 16 | 17 | 28 | 4 | 65 | 23% (target 30%) |

**Literacy:**

St. Ailbe’s has an informed and willing staff, that has nurtured a strong relationship with the student body, creating an effective environment for students of all abilities, focusing on developing their capacities in the area of Literacy;

This atmosphere is enhanced by a detailed DEIS document that is frequently evaluated to support the school achieve its Mission Statement.

The Literacy team has developed an extensive menu of Literacy initiatives that are frequently evaluated.

The following are some of the strategies we have woven into the fabric of our day-to-day classes, to compliment and supplement the teaching and learning of our community.

**Initiatives**

1. One Book/One Community – a programme aimed to develop a culture of reading in our first years - at home or in their spare time, by themselves or with a parent, family member etc. This initiative was concluded this year with a celebration by all involved.
2. Sora – Online Digital Library: This free reading resource was introduced for the first time this year and has proven a great success with many junior students. They can gain access to reading material that is appropriate to their reading levels and interests. It can be accessed through their smart phones, computers, tablets…
3. Vocabulary Enrichment programme – integrated at designated times into our English subject classes and basically deconstructs the writing skills for the students so they are more tacitly aware of the writing process.
4. Drop Everything and Read – a popular scheme which has been running for some years now, encouraging the entire school population to read at various times during a specified week in the school calendar.
5. Rolling Reading – again, another reading initiative that was used this year to encourage classes to participate in reading (of their chosen topic) at identified times throughout the year.
6. Student Voice – we conducted some research with our first years, on their attitudes towards reading. The rationale behind this was to identify those that might display a less than confident attitude in their approach/perception of reading/writing. Subsequently, we used the SORA resource (among others) to guide them towards material that might be of interest to them and was appropriate to their reading ability.
7. Other programmes such as Guest Speaker, Paired Reading in the Community and Readers’ Theatre were also planned for but with the academic year being cut short, are postponed until next term.

**The coming year…**

Our targets within the Literacy team are as follows and will be reviewed in early September 2020:

 1. To evaluate, through student voice research, the menu of literacy initiatives currently on offer to our students;

2. To source and gain access to a standardised literacy and numeracy test for all Junior and Senior Cycle students in our school;

3. To look at narrowing our goals from group to student based;

4. To research new evidence-based strategies on an ongoing basis;

5. To reassess our academic targets – SMARTA.

The Literacy team realise that all these initiatives and goals are fluid and we aspire to research (as stated in target 4) any suggested evidence based initiatives that possess a proven effect size on student performance in their design.

**Numeracy:**

* All first years completed two numeracy competency tests this year. Results were analysed and shared at maths department meetings. Fractions and percentages were identified as an area of difficulty. Whole school approach to tackling this is asking teachers to give results of class tests etc. as a fraction and get students to convert to percentages.
* Measures already in place in the school to improve numeracy:
1. Cross-curricular approach e.g. calculating percentages.
2. HSCL hold project maths courses for parents.
3. Extra-curricular activities related to numeracy. E.g. bingo, math riddles.
4. Numeracy signs throughout the school. Distances in fraction, decimal and percentage.
5. Footsteps on Friday tracks the mileage students walk at lunch.
6. Clock in Every Room
7. Prices in Canteen are all displayed
8. Token Reward System – TY’s count up each week

All of the above measures will be retained for the coming year.

**Use of the School Journal:**

As planned, a review of our current school journal took place in 2019/20 along with a review of our code of behaviour. Changes have been incorporated into the school journal for 2020/21.

**SEN Self-Evaluation:**

Recommendations from DES Circular 0013/2017 and the associated ‘Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools – Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools’ are now firmly embedded in St. Ailbe’s.

A Tipperary ETB initiative led by Dr. Johanna Fitzgerald of MIC commenced during the last year. This initiative is designed to support the SENCO and senior management in all Tipperary ETB schools and will involve staff in-service in the coming year with particular emphasis on devolving responsibility for delivery of SEN teaching to subject departments.

Following on from an advisory visit from the Inspectorate early this year, the SEN team have targeted parents of 8 SEN students who we have involved in the preparation of the student’s Individual Student Plan. Our plan is to increase this number to 12 for the incoming 1st years.

**Policy Review:**

The following policies were reviewed/prepared in 2019/20:

* Healthy Eating
* Admissions
* Changing Rooms
* Intimate Care
* Dignity Charter for Staff
* Dignity Charter for Parents/Guardians
* Critical Incident Policy
* Code of Behaviour
* Classroom Based Assessments
* Junior Certificate Assessment Policy (in response to the cancellation of the state JC examinations)

**Response to Covid-19 School Closure:**

The closure of schools in March was sudden but St. Ailbe’s responded rapidly to the situation.

* Extensive use of online classes using Microsoft teams
* Use of SharePoint
* Weekly reports on student engagement to parents via VSware
* Weekly provision of food boxes
* Posting of work to students with no/unreliable internet access
* Production & distribution of over 200 visors to local frontline staff
* Production of a number of training videos to assist staff, students and parents with the use of the online platforms
* Phone communication with parents of SEN students
* Careers advice and Student support services were maintained
* Weekly AP1 team meetings were held on Teams
* Weekly Student Support Team meetings continued via Teams
* End of year ceremony for 6th year students held online

**Remote Learning (as employed during Covid-19 school closure) Survey, June 2020**

***Summary of Teacher Responses***

**Rationale**

The questions in this survey were based on the technologies that Teachers engaged with during the remote learning phase of the Covid-19 lockdown. The responses were requested to be based on the following three questions:-

* What worked - How do you know?
* What didn't work - Why do you think?
* What changes would or did you make to improve?

And, as much as possible, responses should be evidence based (recognising that some things are very difficult to measure).

**Teacher SharePoint Sites (16 responses)**

* Worked best for those who were using it with their classes before the school closure.
* Easily accessible.
* Can put together high level sites with enormous content.
* Does not have a notify facility (It’s only a website)
* Many of those who had only started using it, switched to Teams for file management.

**Teams - File Sharing (16 responses)**

* Notifies Students
* Useful for posts
* Easy to navigate for students
* Phone interface can be flaky

**Teams – Assignments (25 responses)**

* Very good for:-
	+ Setting assignments
	+ Tracking work
	+ Logging access
	+ Feedback to students
* Quality of photographs submitted varied hugely (some almost impossible to read)
* Some students submitted work by email – probably not sure how to use it properly

**Live Classes (6 responses)**

* Easy to use
* Can share Teacher screen with Students
* Move reasonably quickly through material (Clearly, not as efficient as normal class)
* Not suitable for all types of classes e.g. practical subjects.
* It does take a bit of getting use to:-
	+ At times it can feel like you are talking to yourself
	+ You do not know who else is listening
	+ Don’t know how much attention students are giving
* Requires more planning than you would expect.
* Classes can take a few more minutes to start than normal (waiting for people to connect, solving technical issues etc.).
* Internet speed at both ends is vital (Lack of this will exclude some)
* Acceptable Use Policy is Vital (e.g. two way video link between Student and Teachers private homes)
* Homework can be checked using Class Notebook
* First year classes started the week well with about 80% attendance but after Wednesday this tapered to about 65%. Senior Students fared better
* Would suggest not going over 40min classes and maybe cutting the number of classes per week by one or two

**Pre-Recorded Videos (8 responses)**

* A lot of Teachers expressed interest in finding out more about this.
* Hugh amount of prep time.
* Difficult to gauge how effective they are for our target audience
* Large files are created which can pose problems for slow internet connections.
* Voice over PowerPoint were used effectively in TG/DCG but again, huge prep time.

**E-Mail (25 responses)**

* Students do not regularly check email BUT this turns out to be the most reliable form of communication. If any particular technology failed to work, the fall back was always email.
* Replying to a lot of emails (outside work hours) can be very time consuming.
* Now efficient way of tracking work/assignments.
* Poor communication skills of some students make questions unclear (e.g. using texting shortcuts).

**OneNote (10 responses)**

Teachers who have been use OneNote in their normal daily classes could proceed virtually as normal using live classes in Teams.

Not suitable for all subjects.

**OneNote Class Notebooks**

Each students has their own private section in their class note book where they can upload photos of their homework or exams, type reports/essays etc. that the Teacher can access and correct.

**Microsoft Forms/Quizzes**

* Positive feedback in general.
* Used successfully in exams but with some limitations (autocorrect not suitable for some type of questions).
* Quizzes useful to vary learning experiences.
* Can be done by the students quickly.
* Students seem to engage well.
* Takes time to setup.

**Conducting Exams**

* Microsoft Assignments
* Microsoft Forms
* Moodle
* PowerPoint projects
* E-Mailed exams, students print out exam paper or does the exam on a sheet of paper, photographs the responses and email them back or upload them to their OneNote Notebook for correction.
* Some exams/resources were posted out by SCP and responses posted back to the school.

**Conclusions**

In general, everyone was very positive about engaging in the new technologies.

Clearly, they are a distant second best to our normal classroom experiences. But, when we get back to normal, what we have learned during this time can be used to enhance the educational experiences of both Teachers and Students.

Some students expressed that they had very high workloads but we have to keep this in context. During lockdown, what was normally school time was considered home time to them as they were not in school, which is understandable.

Some teachers found their workload enormous outside normal working hours. Particularly in terms of preparing new material suitable for this new learning environment and dealing with emails/chats from students outside normal working hours.

Different forums like SharePoint v’s Teams, e-mail v’s chat etc. added to confusion. Less so with people who had been using these technologies all along.

More training is required for Teachers and teachers should be complimented for the huge efforts they put in to learning to use these new technologies in a very short and difficult period of time.

Significant training for students (particular Junior Students) needs to take place as soon as we return to school in September just in case of another lockdown.

**Wellbeing**

* ***Transition Programme for Incoming 1st years***

We completed a transition day with our incoming first years using our St. Ailbe’s transition booklet along with a Mentor Day with our first years and assigned 5th year mentors.

* ***Questionnaires for Wellbeing to complete as part of School Self Evaluation.***

During the school year 2019-2020, we began the process of reviewing Wellbeing within St. Ailbe’s. We have conducted student, staff and parents surveys through Microsoft Forms and the responses received have helped us design our wellbeing programme for 2020-2021.

* ***Provision Mapping of Wellbeing in our school***

We are currently mapping out current curriculum provision including PE, SPHE, CSPE and extracurricular support for wellbeing, identifying supports and resources and compiling a calendar of Wellbeing activities in our school throughout the year.

* ***Promotion and awareness of wellbeing in our school***

Wellbeing Indicator posters have been placed in all classrooms and wellbeing board at reception will have different themes/posters throughout the year based around the 6 indicators: Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware. Wellbeing Topics have been covered on our school website and school social media pages. Our Healthy Eating Policy was developed and ratified. Our Awards Ceremony took place online this year recognising the achievements of our students. Our transition programme took place online through the use of introductory and information videos.

* ***Staff Wellbeing:***

Workplace wellbeing day was a great success on February 14th. During Covid-19 we produced a staff newsletter on Wellbeing which included *Teacher Wellbeing & Self-Care during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) School Closures* which hadsome useful information to teachers that can be used during this unprecedented time and to highlight other supports that are available.

* ***Wellbeing Week***

We completed our Wellbeing Week online this year through Facebook and Instagram where we focused on the different Wellbeing Indicators and picked a theme for each of the remaining school weeks during Covid-19. Students completed their different challenges and uploaded their different activities and challenges.

* ***Wellbeing Plan for 2020-2021***

The closure of schools and disruption of normal life brought about by Covid-19 has heightened our awareness of the importance of maintaining wellbeing for all members of our school community. As we reopen in St. Ailbe’s, there are five key wellbeing messages that the Department recommend embedding within our school community.

1. A sense of safety
2. Calming
3. Self and community-efficacy
4. Social connectedness and
5. Hope

At a whole school level we in St. Ailbe’s can support a positive transition back to school by conveying these messages. In 2020-2021, we will be building towards providing a 400-hour junior cycle Wellbeing Programme.

CSPE will provide opportunities to explore some of the wider impacts of the pandemic, at home, in our communities and in the wider world.

SPHE will provide an important space where students can reflect on the significant personal, social and emotional changes brought about by Covid-19

PE raises awareness of the importance of physical and mental wellbeing especially in recent months.

Remote learning has highlighted some skills that students feel a need to develop including self-management, time management, goal setting, self-regulation, and independent learning skills.

We aim to implement the following for students as part of our Wellbeing Programme for 2020-2021:

* Transition programme for 1st years (Online information videos and PowerPoints as well as 1st day transition day)
* Tutor Class
* Guidance and Counselling
* Study Skills
* Internet Safety and Awareness
* Friends for Life programme
* Digital Media Literacy
* Learning to Learn Programme (New for 2020-2021)
* ICT (focus on Microsoft Teams, SharePoint and Office 365 to support remote learning)
* Specially designed SPHE lessons for use across all year groups during the first weeks back in school. (New for 2020-2021)