**School Self Evaluation report 2022/23**

**Introduction:**

This year signified the full return to normality following the disruption and restrictions surrounding Covid-19. The school enrolled 19 Ukrainian students, 5 of whom sat the Junior Certificate. In November the first open night held since 2019 proved very successful which along with a very well-designed transition programme lead to very healthy enrolment for September 2023. The provision of 5 temporary classrooms in summer 2022 proved crucial to ensuring a comfortable student experience against the backdrop of increasing student numbers in the school. Our 5th and 6th year students occupied these new classrooms and the associated social areas and they appreciated having this space to themselves. The school embarked on a journey into the area of restorative practice with over 20 of our staff receiving training from Joe Power in this area. With increasing students and teacher numbers in the school came significantly elevated participation and success in a wide variety of sporting activities. Our Croke Park teams were restructured to better meet the changing needs of the school. The Transition Year students had an excellent year, taking part in a successful musical ‘Blue Suede Shoes’ and enjoying a fabulous trip to Madrid.

St. Ailbe’s fulfils its statutory reporting requirement through its DEIS plan and this School SelfEvaluation report is designed to compliment the DEIS plan and, moreover, to give our stakeholders a sense of the work carried out during the year by our staff and our various teams, which helps the school to meet its DEIS targets. The report also outlines proposed work for the coming year. In broad terms, DEIS planning aims to improve literacy & numeracy standards, maintain and improve parental and wider community involvement and enhance, attendance, retention and progression.

**Restorative practice:**

St. Ailbe’s tries to foster high levels of communication and empathy between staff and students and in order to further enhance our ability to manage staff-student and student-student interactions over 20 teachers received training in restorative practice techniques in 2022/23. We intend to provide this training for more staff in the coming year and will make use of restorative circles in our classroom and teachers will use restorative questions when solving conflict.

What is restorative practice?

Restorative practice is based primarily on a set of core values and the enhancement of particular skills such as the ability to empathise and to find solutions to specific problems. This practice allows for building trust between and with people. It provides a structured approach in the form of a scaffold, which helps build and sustain relationships, and provides a focus which allows for the potential growth of positive relationships to become established between people.

Through the development of empathy, and promoting understanding of perspective taking, people can learn to respect each other and where someone is coming from in terms of their own expression of thought and feelings.

Restorative [Practice programmes] in schools aim to develop:

• communities that value the building of quality relationships coupled with clear expectations and limits

• restorative skills in the way we interact with young people – using teachable moments to enhance learning

• restorative processes that resolve conflict and repair damaged relationships

• communities that are forward thinking

**Behaviour for Learning:**

Our Behaviour for Learning teacher is supported by the BFL Croke Park team. Much of the work of the BFL team is to promote good behaviour by positive reinforcement. Work carried out this year included:

* Introducing the token system with 1st and 2nd years and using 4 TY students to administer the system.
* New posters refocusing on target behaviour were placed around the school.
* Implemented on a trial basis the ‘Helping Hands’ anti-bullying software with 1st/2nd years. The team evaluated the usefulness of this and have decided that it is of limited value and we will not continue with it going forward.
* The BFL teacher met with the NBSS coordinator to discuss positive behaviour enhancing initiatives being run in the school such as ‘Friends For Life’ and the ‘ALERT’ programme.
* Team members attended the 10 week Restorative Practice training, the ‘Just Right’ State workshops and attended ‘Hidden Bullying’ seminar.
* Numeracy signposts were redesigned and installed.
* Classrooms were renumbered to make it easier for students to get to class on time.

**Subject Inspections and DEIS Advisory meeting**

The Science Department was inspected in January 2023. As part of all subject department inspections, the DES takes the opportunity to see if the school is meeting the requirements in respect of Child Protection and Anti-Bullying. St. Ailbe’s was found to be meeting all of these requirements. The findings and Recommendations of the inspection are reported below;

**Science Inspection Findings**

1. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment was good, with some examples of very good practice. • An effective focus on students’ scientific literacy was evident in most lessons.
2. All lessons began by linking to students’ prior learning, which allowed teachers to assess students’ understanding.
3. In most lessons, student activity was central to learning, and ensured high levels of engagement and motivation.
4. The quality of provision and whole-school support for Science was very good.
5. Planning and preparation were of a good standard; individual lessons were very effectively planned.

**Science Inspection Recommendations**

1. In half the lessons observed, the intended learning for the lesson was not discussed with students, and as a result, they were unclear about the learning to be achieved. The teachers should share the purpose of lessons with students in order to provide appropriate guidance for student self-assessment.
2. While units of learning were identified in the junior cycle science plan, the key learning for each unit was not clarified. The science department should adjust the subject plan to include key learning and how this could be assessed.
3. The science plan did not specify how students’ investigative and research skills could be incrementally developed over the three years of junior cycle. When planning, the teachers should indicate the particular scientific skills to be advanced in each unit of learning.

The Science department provided very useful feedback to other departments at a subsequent staff meeting.

**DEIS Advisory Visit**

A DES representative attended the school and met with the Senior and Middle Management team to provide advice to the team around the themes of DEIS planning, target setting and reporting. As with our previous experiences of DES advisory visits this meeting was very positive, affirming and useful.

**Subject Department Self-Evaluation**

The staff carried out the annual analysis of, and reflection on, Leaving Certificate results in September 2022. This included a comparison with national results and was used to assist with planning for the next academic year.

**Literacy & Numeracy**

Though literacy and numeracy are primarily delivered through maths and English classes St. Ailbe’s endeavours to support this learning in a number of alternative ways. Outside of provision for some students via small group learning support classes we support all by involving our students and indeed our wider community in various initiatives and events. Some of these are outlined below.

* Roll on Reading
* Library Class once a week
* World Book Day March
* Skyhawk Day (One Book One Community) was a great success
* DEAR
* Maths week early in the year
* World Literacy Day

We continue to monitor literacy and numeracy levels to aid with target setting and DEIS planning. PPAD-E testing is carried out in 1st year and is used to determine baseline literacy data as well as helping the SEN team to allocate literacy support to students and to help determine candidates for further testing for RACE accommodations in the state examinations.

Plans for the next school year include:

* Possibly re organise the library
* Donal Ryan- Visiting 3rd Year/2nd Year
* Possible new 1st year novel for next year – One Book One Community
* Link with wellbeing committee for books in staffroom
* Review Literacy and Numeracy test for LCA next year

**Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)**

The Junior Certificate School Programme attempts to help young people experience success and develop a positive self-image by providing a curriculum and assessment framework suitable to their needs. The programme aims to ensure that students actively participate in their learning, make progress and build on their achievements. The programme also aims to develop students’ literacy, numeracy, communication and group work skills. On completion of the programme, students receive a profile which is an official record of their achievements from the Department of Education and Skills.

The St. Ailbe’s JCSP team carried out 8 initiatives during the year:

1. Christmas Celebration (in collaboration with the Literacy team)
2. Geography
3. Artist in the Classroom
4. Home Economics
5. Maths Digital Device
6. Literacy Author in Residence
7. Guidance
8. Summer Celebration

JCSP statement were completed for students by the appropriate subject teachers and each student’s profile of achiement was collated and presented during a very successful ‘Summer celebration’.

In the 2023/24 year the JCSP team plans to:

1. Apply for initiatives in Oct 2023
2. Review the number of students in 2nd and 3rd year in JCSP.
3. Create a JCSP group for incoming 1st years based on CAT scores and primary School recommendations i.e. refine our selection criteria
4. Raise awareness of JCSP in the wider School community.
5. Improve communication: Parents also to be informed their son/daughter is in JCSP
6. A targeted approach to the use of initiatives.

**Risk Assessment**

By law TETB and St. Ailbe’s School must identify hazards in the workplaces under their control and assess the risk presented by the hazards. Employers must write down the risks and what to do about them. This is known as Risk Assessment. In view of the increasing number of students and staff on site in recent years it was deemed prudent to form a Croke Park team to undertake this task of managing these statutory requirements. The team, in collaboration with relevant subject departments have prepared the necessary risk assessments. The work was facilitated by TETB led training workshops.

Priorities for the coming year include:

* Identify any new machines in the practical rooms and carry out a risk assessment.
* Room numbers in the school have changed during the school year and extra rooms have been added and our fire exit plan will need to reflect this.
* Signs will need to be made for outside so students know where to stand outside during a fire drill.
* Carry out a fire drill during the first term next year.
* First aid equipment and qualification check.

**TETB Communities of Practice – Excellence in Education**

As a Tipperary ETB school, St. Ailbe’s School benefits from the expertise and experience of the wider TETB organisation. In recent years TETB has provided a forum for its schools to share good practice with each other. In the 2022/23 year TETB established a community of practice centred around ‘Excellence in Education’. Excellence in Education is one of the five ETB core values. Principals and Deputy Principals were invited to share examples of excellence in education from their own schools with the other schools. This was facilitated by Dr.Tayo

The emerging themes from the community of practice meetings were distilled down and schools have been asked to nominate themes relevant to themselves which have implications for excellence in teaching and learning. The themes identified by St. Ailbe’s are:

1. The complex issue of homework
2. Managing mixed ability classes

**Academic Tracking**

Academic Tracking commenced this year in early October where students were surveyed as to what grades they hoped to achieve during the course of this year. This Academic Tracking Team concentrated on 5th and 6th Year students and data was collected using Microsoft Forms.

Students were surveyed again after their Christmas Exams and also just after their mid term tests prior to their Easter Holidays. In this survey the students base was expanded to capture exam results for 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th Years. In this last survey students were given a chance to state whether they were happy with their results and also given the opportunity to explain how they could do better in their exams.

Students and parents were emailed a link to a Form which they were required to fill in. It was suggested that parents would sit down with their child and go through their results as they completed the Form. All the data was collected and after each survey all their results are compared and printed out so as the students can get a picture of exactly how they are doing, and whether or not they are achieving their targets which they set out in the October survey.