

School Self-Evaluation Report 2025/26

Aligned to DEIS Plan Targets (2025–2028)

Introduction

St. Ailbe's School continues to implement a systematic, evidence-informed cycle of school self-evaluation, explicitly aligned to the DEIS Plan 2025–2028 targets across all pillars.

Data sources including PPADE analysis, attendance tracking, extracurricular participation records, and stakeholder voice are used to:

- Identify priority needs
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Adjust practice in line with DEIS targets

There is a clear emphasis on moving from activity to measurable impact, ensuring that all actions contribute directly to target outcomes.

The 2025/26 academic year was once again a very busy and successful one for St. Ailbe's School. Enrolments continued to grow, enabling us to offer an increasingly expansive curriculum at both Junior and Senior Cycle. St. Ailbe's is a DEIS school and the school fulfils its statutory reporting obligations through its DEIS reporting which includes target-setting and action-planning in relation to the pillars of the DEIS viz. attendance, retention, transitions, literacy, numeracy, examination attainment and partnership with parents and others. This SSE report (which is not intended to be exhaustive) is designed to complement the data-rich statutory reporting by giving a sense of the activities occurring in the school which go towards meeting our DEIS targets. In this report quantitative data is used where available.

School Structures:

St. Ailbe's School benefits greatly from having a Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher, a Behaviour for Learning (BFL) teacher and the presence and support of the School Completion Programme (SCP) in the school. These personnel provide invaluable support to our students, parents and staff. The school also has two middle management teams comprising of AP1 and AP2 postholders. These postholders provide support to the senior management team and their roles are both developmental and managerial. St. Ailbe's also benefits from having particularly active AEN and Pastoral Care teams which meet once per week. Our guidance team are active across all teams. There is substantial crossover between all of these teams and agencies, in terms of personnel, which results in very effective communication and ability to respond. The Attendance team (Senior Management, SCP and HSCL) meet once per week to monitor and address any attendance issues. All staff members

are active on at least one Croke Park team which meet four times a year. These teams are reviewed each year and changed to reflect the needs of the school. As well as addressing the needs of the school, these teams provide opportunities for staff to make real contributions to the development of the school and have helped to build schoolwide capacity.

1. Attendance

DEIS Targets

- Reduce chronic absenteeism from 26.4% to 5%
- Improve attendance among targeted at-risk cohorts
- Reduce partial absenteeism in senior cycle

SSE Actions and Findings

The introduction of a structured, tiered intervention model has strengthened the school's response:

- Early-stage triggers (3–5 days) ensure preventative intervention
- Escalation to Attendance Officer and HSCL ensures targeted and intensive supports

The **Anseo** framework will further promote consistency in:

- Identifying patterns (e.g. day patterns, partial absence)
- Matching interventions to level of need

Evaluation of Impact

- There is greater consistency across year groups in how attendance issues are managed
- Earlier intervention is reducing the number of students progressing to chronic absenteeism
- However, chronic absence remains a significant challenge, indicating that while systems are strong, intensity of intervention must increase

Next Steps (DEIS-Driven)

- Expand Check & Connect and mentoring systems for high-risk students
- Increase focus on partial attendance patterns in 5th year, directly addressing DEIS Target 3
- Strengthen parent engagement earlier in the attendance cycle

2. Retention

DEIS Target

- Increase 1st Year participation in extracurricular activities to:
 - 70% (2026)
 - 80% (2027)
 - 90% (2028)

SSE Actions and Findings

The school has prioritised student engagement as a driver of retention, with:

- Active Schools Flag initiatives
- Expansion of extracurricular opportunities
- Strong pastoral structures (SST, AEN, Year Heads)

Survey data indicates that students involved in activities report:

- Higher levels of connection to school
- Improved wellbeing and engagement

Evaluation of Impact

- Positive trends in student engagement and participation
- Increased awareness among staff of extracurricular participation as a protective factor
- Need for more systematic tracking of participation data against DEIS milestones

Next Steps

- Introduce a whole-school tracking system for participation
- Target non-participating students, particularly those identified as at risk
- Strengthen link between tutor system and activity signposting

3. Transitions

DEIS Target

- Reduce subject changes in 5th Year from 10.4% to 5%

SSE Actions and Findings

A structured approach to transitions includes:

- CAT testing and data-informed guidance
- Subject choice programmes and exhibitions
- Careers events and progression planning

There is increased emphasis on early intervention at 3rd Year / TY stage.

Evaluation of Impact

- Students are making more informed subject choices
- Improved alignment between ability, interest, and subject uptake
- Some subject changes persist, suggesting need for earlier and deeper engagement

Next Steps

- Use CAT/Athena data more explicitly in subject choice conversations
- Increase parent involvement at key decision-making points
- Provide follow-up guidance early in 5th year

4. Literacy (Key DEIS Priority)

DEIS Targets

- Reduce by 40% the number of students scoring ≤ 85 in reading comprehension
- Reduce percentage of 3rd year students requiring RACE (without diagnosis) from 33% to 25%

SSE Data Analysis

- 67.6% of 1st year students improved their PPADE Reading Comprehension from autumn to spring.
- Mean standard score increased by +6.2 points
- Students scoring ≤ 85 reduced from 22.1% $\rightarrow$ 17% (this corresponds to a 23% reduction)

Evaluation Against Targets

- Strong progress towards the 40% reduction target, but not yet achieved
- A clearly identifiable cohort (17.1%) requires intensive intervention

Whole-School Response

Staff survey suggests there is increasing consistency across subject departments in:

- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Use of comprehension strategies across subjects
- Focus on subject literacy

However, implementation is not yet fully embedded across all classrooms.

Evaluation of Impact

- Clear, measurable improvements in literacy outcomes
- Strong correlation between explicit strategy teaching and gains in comprehension
- Improved student confidence in engaging with academic texts

Next Steps

- Target the lowest-performing cohort with small-group interventions
- Expand DEAR and reading fluency work
- Provide ongoing CPD to ensure consistency across all subjects

5. Numeracy

DEIS Target

- Increase HL Maths uptake from 48.5% to 60%

SSE Actions and Findings

- Use of Athena to monitor performance
- Promotion of study tools (examrevision.ie) and exam supports (studyclix)
- Ongoing discussion at Maths Department level
- Maths department have initiated a drop-in workshop to boost success levels

Evaluation of Impact

- Good systems in place for identifying potential HL students
- However, whole-school numeracy is less developed than literacy
- Need for greater consistency across subject areas

Next Steps

- Develop and implement a whole-school numeracy strategy
- Introduce confidence-building supports (peer mentoring, modelling success)
- Increase parent awareness of HL Maths benefits

6. Examination Attainment

DEIS Targets

- Increase % of students performing in line with or above potential
- Reduce number of subjects below expectation in 5th Year

SSE Actions and Findings

- 5th Year Attainment Initiative (mentoring, tracking)
- Use of digital platforms and exam resources
- Innovative teaching strategies (Flipped Classroom, Open Door Week)

Evaluation of Impact

- Improved student engagement and exam preparation
- Strong link between literacy improvement and attainment gains
- More consistent monitoring of student progress

Next Steps

- Refine mentoring system to target underperforming students
- Increase use of data to identify trends in attainment
- Strengthen subject-level analysis of outcomes

7. Partnership with Parents and Others

DEIS Targets

- Increase PT attendance by 10%
- Increase event attendance to 50%
- Ensure optimisation of parental use of new management system – TYRO.

SSE Actions and Findings

- Strong HSCL-led initiatives
- Regular communication and parent workshops
- Active collaboration with external agencies

Evaluation of Impact

- Improved communication with parents
- Increased support for attendance and learning
- Engagement still varies across cohorts

Next Steps

- Track attendance at events more systematically
- Target hard-to-reach families
- Expand digital engagement supports (VSWare training)
- Continue to strengthen community links e.g. through TY and 5th year work experience, visits to old folks homes, litter picking, feeder primary schools, local sports clubs etc.
- Continue to avail of the services of and foster links with local TETB providers eg. FET in Tipperary Community Centre, FET pre-apprenticeship training facility on Bansha road, Apprenticeships at the Archerstown facility,

8. Wellbeing and Inclusion

DEIS Alignment

Supports attendance, retention and participation targets

SSE Findings

- Expanded extracurricular provision
- Active student voice
- Staff engagement in CPD (NCSE pastoral care training undertaken this year by PC team)
- Whole staff training in NCSE RELATE programme

Impact

- Improved student wellbeing
- Increased participation and inclusion
- Strong contribution to retention and attendance targets

Conclusion

The SSE process demonstrates clear alignment with DEIS targets and measurable progress, particularly in literacy and systems supporting attendance. Further data analysis will be carried out in the first term of the 2026/27 year to evaluate the success of actions undertaken to achieve targets and this will be reported in the statutory DEIS report for 2025/26.

Key Strengths of the SSE process in St. Ailbe's include

- Strong use of data to inform practice
- Measurable improvement in literacy outcomes
- Structured and consistent attendance systems

Key Areas for Development

- Achieving full DEIS literacy target (Reduce by **40%** the number of students scoring ≤ 85 in reading comprehension between autumn and spring.)
- Development of a whole-school numeracy strategy
- Strengthening tracking systems for attendance and extracurricular participation

Priority Actions

- Intensify targeted supports for identified cohorts
- Embed consistency of practice across all classrooms
- Maintain close alignment between SSE evaluation and DEIS targets