



## Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

### Context:

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is a Catholic voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The school, named after the founder of the order, Edmund Ignatius Rice, opened its doors in September 1871. Pupil numbers have increased greatly over the years from 233 (1971) to 414 (1981) to a current enrolment of over 1000 pupils. We traditionally welcome pupils from a wide catchment area and this mix of town and country contributes greatly to the good atmosphere which is a celebrated feature of the school. The school remains, of course, a Christian Brothers School with the staff and management committed to the ethos of the Edmund Rice Schools. The current principal is Mr. Ben Travers. This year's completion and progress of SSE work was interrupted by the school's closure on March 12<sup>th</sup> due to Covid 19.

### 1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of our last improvement plan, the findings of this self-evaluation, and our current improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

#### 1.1 Outcomes of our previous improvement plans:

- *The focus of our evaluation for 2014/2015 was numeracy and ongoing actions include*  
Agreed use of common methodologies across all subject areas (e.g. results as fractions).  
Numeracy posters in classrooms  
Increase use of team and group work in class  
A particular focus on problem solving  
A strong emphasis on improving core skills using common practice and extra classes in first year to work on these core skills  
Casio calculators given to all staff to advance common practice
- *The focus of our evaluation for 2015/2016 was literacy and actions are still ongoing*  
An increased use of the library by class groups  
An increased use of IT in class to complement literacy skills  
An increased uptake in students taking Higher Level English  
A particular focus on the use of keywords  
Development of study skills programme  
Literacy posters in classrooms  
A focus on positive written feedback from teachers to students written work and tests.
- *The focus of our evaluations for 2016/17 was Communication and actions are still ongoing*  
Providing personalised comments including areas for improvement in school reports  
Teach students how to make use of teacher feedback  
Use learning intentions in classes and in the school journal  
Improve website and twitter feed to improve access for students and parents  
Expand and improve the use of the school app  
Team teaching to share methodologies and improve teacher feedback.
- *The focus of our work in 2017/18 was consolidation of the existing three strands and reinforcement of school wide approaches to numeracy, literacy and communication.*
- *The focus of our evaluations in 2018/19 was Independent Learning through CBAs and actions are still ongoing*  
Encourage independent learning facilitated by the teacher in the CBA process.  
Fully inform parents & students about the CBA process, emphasising the importance of Independent Learning  
To provide adequate resources to facilitate the CBA process.  
To distribute the CBA timetable fairly over the school calendar  
To support staff and provide opportunities for staff to share their experiences in completing CBAs.

## 1.2 The focus of this evaluation

The focus of SSE activities for 2019/2020 was intended to be the implementation of improvement strategies for our fourth strand 'Independent Learning through CBAs'. A constructive and worthwhile meeting of our committee with Declan Quarterly (PDST) in November to review our SIP helped identify some other areas to improve and work on. We introduced a number of initiatives to support Independent Learning, particularly within CBAs, and also to act on some of the advice offered for a more successful implementation of all SSE initiatives.

These included: -

- External support services (PDST) were invited to conduct a review of our SIP and SSE activities.
- A review and updating of the presentation to parents and student workshops on the Junior Cycle/CBAs
- Facilitation of staff led focus groups (staff meeting Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>) to share good practise and experience of the CBA process.
- The creation of an SSE placemat for each classroom to assist teachers with the implementation of all four strands of SSE in the classroom.
- The placemat and the school's SSE has been included in induction programs for PME and NQT teachers and as part of the school Droichead programme.
- The creation and circulation of a Reflection Poster for each classroom, to encourage the practise of student self-reflection as part of the independent learning process in our classroom activities.
- A toolkit of resources was being assembled to be made available to teachers to encourage independent learning becoming part of our classroom culture and homework activities.
- SSE initiatives and actions being made accessible and relevant to students through a specific SSE student notice board and inclusion of a student orientated SSE placemat and student Reflection Poster in the school journal.

## 2. Findings \*\*\*

### 2.1 This is effective / very effective practice in our school

- Most teachers (95%) who had completed the CBA process described it as worthwhile and most (80%) felt the students had enjoyed the experience.
- The vast majority of staff have engaged with Junior Cycle in-service, TL21 or other CPD opportunities exploring teaching and learning.
- The majority of teachers have previously engaged in project work with junior classes or with TY groups.
- Most students were aware that CBA results would appear on their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.
- Many students felt that the purpose of a CBA is to develop skills and assess other types of intelligence.
- Most parents attended a parents' information night on CBAs and the new Junior Cycle.
- There was broad agreement amongst parents that work for the CBA should be the student's own work.

### 2.2. This is how we know

- Surveys completed by third year students who had completed CBAs in second year.
- Surveys completed by parents of second years students before they completed CBAs this year.
- Surveys completed by 44 staff members (separate surveys were circulated to staff who had and who had not completed a CBA with one of their classes)
- Review of TL21 survey results on independent learning and focus groups.
- A focus group of school management and the SSE team concerning issues that have arisen re: CBAs to date.

**\*\*\*These are the findings based on surveys conducted in 2018/19 which continue to be the basis for a large portion of the work of our SSE committee. The abrupt school closure meant re-surveying to assess progress in Independent Learning and CBAs or discussions toward another strand were not completed this year. The surveying will be completed in February/ March 2021 and be inclusive of the new SIP. The areas identified for improvement are additions or developments of the 2019/2020 SIP which was broadly speaking completed in full.**

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

*Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.*

- To provide a toolkit of resource materials and templates that can be used to incorporate independent learning into our classes.
- To develop student engagement in the SSE process in the school. Supporting their understanding of SSE strategies as outlined in the school journal and encouraging them to implement the strategies as an exercise in independent learning.
- Encourage parents and students to value the importance of independent learning and suggest ways it can be practised at home.
- To encourage reflective practise as a means of independent learning amongst students and as part of teacher routines in class or class assignments.
- To promote active engagement with the SSE Placemat provided to all staff to renew and bolster good practise within each of the 4 areas of teaching and learning.

### 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 Sep 2020 to June 2021)

Targets	Actions	Person (s) responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
To provide a toolkit of resource materials and templates that can be used to incorporate independent learning into our classes.	A folder on the shared drive will be created and used to share relevant materials and templates to facilitate independent learning in classroom and homework activities.	Damien  SSE Committee	A folder of resources that are relevant and useful to staff available on the common drive.		
To develop student engagement in the SSE process in the school. Supporting their understanding of SSE strategies as outlined in the school journal and encouraging them to implement the strategies as an exercise in independent learning.	A member of the SSE committee and management will speak with each year group at assembly in September to explain SSE and emphasise the page in the journal.  Year Heads/Management will renew the message during the year at assembly.	SSE Committee  Ben/Sharon Leo/Rory	A good indication of understanding and engagement with the strategies evident through surveys and focus groups.		
Encourage parents and students to value the importance of independent learning and suggest ways it can be practised at home.	Information and resources made available on the school app.  Included on agenda/ part of presentations at gatherings of parents where message is relevant such as 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year JCT meeting.	Damien  Relevant meeting host.	A good indication of understanding evident through surveys.  Included on relevant agendas		
To encourage reflective practise as a means of independent learning amongst students and as part of teacher routines in class or class assignments.	Poster on reflection displayed prominently in every classroom.  Presentation to staff meeting in September on possible strategies to include Reflection as part of our routines.  Provide opportunity to share best practise	Damien  SSE committee work on surveys	Surveys of teachers and students indicate high level of implementation. Students being better able to reflect on learning in 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Assessment tasks and TY interviews. Meeting as below facilitated.		
To promote active engagement with the SSE Placemat provided to all staff to renew and bolster good practise within each of the 4 areas of teaching and learning.	SSE Placemat displayed on every teachers' desk. Provide opportunity to share best practise between subjects in achieving all four. The importance of the four strands renewed at staff meeting early in the year.	Damien  Ben/Leo Sharon/Rory	Included as part of SSE material in September. Meeting of teachers in small groups with focused agenda facilitated during the year.		