

Clonkeen College

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

1. Introduction

All second level schools are now required to draw up school improvement plans (SIP) as part of a process of self-evaluation. The Department of Education and Skills in Circular 0056/2022: SSE Next Steps 2022-2026 has requested that 2022-2023 be a review year during which times schools are required to:

- Use/Continue to use the SSE process to identify and reflect on the impact of COVID-19 on their pupils'/students' educational experiences and outcomes, their wellbeing, their motivation to learn, and their engagement in learning.
- Consider the requirements regarding use of the SSE process to initiate a wellbeing promotion review and development cycle by 2025 as set up in Circular 0032/2021 and Circular 0033/2021.
- Take stock of the effectiveness of their SSE process to date, developing and consolidating it as necessary to ensure it is collaborative, inclusive and impactful.

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

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period September 2022 to June 2023. At a staff meeting in September, teachers were given options taken from the SSE guidance and after a period of discussion were invited to vote on what they viewed as a priority for action. The SSE team also met with the Student Council at their training day to seek their input.

Through this process of collaboration with school staff and students, and in response to the needs of our school, the following focus area was selected for review:

- Motivation of our students to learn.

Based on feedback from teachers and student council at the initial stage, a survey was designed using google forms and administered. One class group from every year group was surveyed totalling 130 students. Parents were also surveyed with 250 responses received. By using an on-line tool, results were instantly collated and analysed by the SSE team. Key findings were presented to staff at a whole school meeting.

2. School Self-Evaluation Findings

2.1 Effective practice in our school – main strengths

- The majority of our students are motivated in school
- Verbal praise for having done well and positive comments (via Compass/email) motivates our students to work harder.
- Teachers motivate our students by giving genuine praise and talking to students individually in class
- Our students are motivated by a need to do well for themselves and their parents and to achieve a good grade.
- A high percentage of our students put effort into their homework.

2.2. Data analysis

- 91% of students are motivated in school.
- When asked ‘*what do teachers do to help motivate you?*’, 52% of students and 60% of parents said that teachers offering genuine praise is the leading motivator.

Teachers talking to students individually also helps motivate as indicated by 42% of students.

- When asked ‘*what would motivate you to work harder?*’ the most popular responses included:
 1. Verbal praise for having done well (57%)
 2. A positive email home from a teacher (48%)
 3. A positive comment on Compass (45%)

Parents indicated that when receiving praise relating to school, 52% would rather receive a written comment home via Compass as opposed to 11% who would like a phone-call.

- When looking at intrinsic factors impacting student motivation, the results show that 75% of our students are motivated by a desire to want to do well for themselves. The parent-survey results also favoured this response.

62% of students identified a desire for a good grade as a motivating factor.

- 72% of students are not motivated by bookings. The parent-survey results support this.
- Students were asked to rate their effort made in homework, 10 being lots of effort. The survey shows:
 - The average rating was 6.75.
 - 39% rated themselves between 8-10.
 - 12 % rated themselves between 0-5 for effort.

2.3 Areas prioritised for improvement

The survey results identify praise as a key factor in motivating our students. An initial review of Compass by the SSE team indicated that it was being predominantly used to record negative Bookings. Using Compass to give positive feedback/praise to our students, was identified and prioritized for further improvement.

A school improvement plan was drafted and presented to staff at a whole school meeting outlining our targets for improvement and actions to be taken by teachers, by departments and in collaboration with wider school initiatives. Our overall aim was to improve our practice of praising students by increasing the number of positive comments recorded on Compass.

Under the LAOS document 2022, Statements of Practice - Learning and Teaching, this would fall under Domain 1: Learner Outcomes

Standard: Students enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners

We aim to improve our practice further by:

- Creating a culture of praise within the school
- Improving our provision for praise on Compass
- Increasing the quality and frequency of praise in the number of positive comments recorded on Compass

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**

4. Evaluation of Our Improvement Plan.

4.1 Summary of findings

Having carried out the actions outlined in the SIP, the SSE team re-surveyed the school community to identify the impact of our actions on student motivation, if any. A questionnaire was given to both students (a random class group from each year) and parents while some teachers participated in a focus group. Here is a summary of findings

- 68% of students surveyed stated that they were motivated in school.
- 89% of students and 75% of parents stated that they were aware of the positive comments system on Compass.
- 66% stated that they knew how to earn a positive comment.
- 53% of students had received a positive comment since September.
- 35% of students didn't know whether they had received a positive comment or not.
- Most students agreed that a positive comment increased their enthusiasm, engagement, and confidence in the subject.
- 86% of parents stated their son has been motivated by positive comments received.
- 30% of students stated that getting a positive comment made no difference to them.

- A focus group held with teachers indicated an increase in the number of positive comments given but had room for improvement. Reminders from the SSE Team were particularly helpful. When asked if they inform their students when a positive comment has been awarded, a mixed response was received.

4.2 Analysis of findings

Awareness within the school community of the availability of Compass to record and praise student achievement has greatly improved. Many of our students are now receiving positive comments and understand how to earn these. For most of our students, praise (via these positive comments) is having a positive impact on student motivation.

However, findings also indicate fluctuations in motivation (from 91% to 68%) and a significant number of students indicated that receiving a positive comment made no difference to their motivation. This may indicate that praise is not the only contributor to motivation and that other factors are at play which may not be easily influenced.

5. Moving Forward

Our SIP can inform our teaching and learning in the following ways:

- The Deputy Principal will discuss positive behaviour and the positive booking system with students at assemblies.
- The Deputy Principal will include the positive booking system on the agenda for the Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers
- Year Heads will work with Tutors to promote and celebrate positive behaviour within the classroom.
- Tutors will read out positive comments to their tutor groups.
- Teachers will continue to praise students and record this by way of a positive comment on Compass.
- Teachers will inform students when recording a positive comment.
- Teachers will continue to explain to students how positive comments can be earned.
- The SSE team will continue to promote the positive comment system by reminding teachers to log comments.

Our Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this improvement plan is from September 2022- December 2023

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
Create a culture of praise by raising awareness amongst teachers and students	Address Tutor groups	Core Team	A consensus amongst staff that Compass would be used to record positive comments/praise.	Positive comments should not just be given to those students who have had an improvement in their behaviour. Low-key legends should not be forgotten nor high achievers.	The teacher focus group indicated a greater use of compass in awarding positive comments but it was helpful to get reminders to log these.
	Presentation to all teachers – discussion on ‘genuine praise’	Core Team			
	Explain to students how to earn positive comments	Tutors	Focus group with teachers indicating a favourable response		
	Read out positive comments logged on Compass to students	Tutors			
	Inform students if a positive comment had been logged	All teachers			
Improve our provision for praise.	Identify the challenges faced by teachers in recording comments on Compass	Core Team	Provide additional options in the Compass dropdown menu for praising students	The additional ‘comment box’ was made optional Further positive comment options were added after consultation with parents and Student Council.	Teachers are happy with the new categories.
	Review current positive comment options on Compass	Core Team			
	Make Compass more accessible for recording positive comments	I.T. Department			
	Discuss ways of recognising success within subjects	Subject Departments			

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<p>Improve our quality and frequency of praise</p>	<p>Discuss 'genuine praise' with teachers.</p> <p>Log positive comments weekly</p> <p>Investigate the number of positive comments being logged on Compass</p> <p>Collaborate with other school initiatives such as Behaviour and Awards</p> <p>Focus group with teachers to identify impact of changes</p>	<p>Core Team</p> <p>All teachers</p> <p>Core Team</p> <p>Core Team</p> <p>SSE Co-ordinator</p>	<p>A growth in the graph in the number of positive comments recorded</p> <p>A positive response from teachers having engaged in using Compass for recording positive comments</p>	<p>Reminders were sent out to teachers to log positive comments on Compass</p>	<p>To date there has been an increase both in the number of teachers using Compass to give positive comments and the frequency in which they are given.</p>