



St. Finnachta's N.S.

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

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 The outcomes of previous SSE cycles

In the first cycle of SSE (2012-2016), the school's focus was on pupils' learner outcomes in English reading, particularly reading comprehension. There were notable improvements in pupils' attainments over the implementation period of the school improvement plan.

Teaching and learning continued to underpin the school's second cycle of SSE (2016-2020) with a new focus on developing teachers' individual practice regarding the introduction of New Primary Language Curriculum. The school has successfully introduced the new PLC.

In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in schools, the completion of the second cycle of SSE was extended from 2020 to 2022. In this extended second phase, the school used the SSE process to continue its work on language with the implementation of a new whole-school plan for English. The consistent improvements in pupils' learner outcomes in English reading continue to be very evident.

The school also used the extended second cycle to help address challenges arising from the pandemic which was primarily concerned with supporting the successful transition of pupils and staff back to school. This was done in the context of the Department of Education's *'Supporting the Wellbeing of School Communities as Schools Reopen: Guidance for Schools'* and the school's COVID-19 Response Plan. Although the transition back to school has been very successful, the impact of the pandemic and school closures has been significant, and it has placed a renewed focus on the importance of the well-being of the school community.

1.2 The focus of this evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St. Finnachta's National School was undertaken during the period September 2023 to September 2026. It was decided that our School Self Evaluation would be used to support the introduction and implementation of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, where we will focus on the promotion of wellbeing at our school. A Wellbeing Promotion Committee was established, and some members of the committee undertook CPD training relating to wellbeing promotion. The committee examined the four key areas of the Wellbeing Framework and gathered data relating to these key areas from pupils, staff and parents/ carers through the use of questionnaires. The committee designed questionnaires for relevant participants after engaging with department of education sample questionnaires for the promotion of wellbeing. The committee adapted and developed questionnaires from these samples with knowledge of our own school context.

After extensive analysis of the data gathered by the Wellbeing Promotion Committee over multiple meetings, Key Area 4 'Relationships and Partnerships' was identified as the priority focus area for improvement and development. In the initial stages of our school's engagement with the SSE process in respect of Wellbeing Promotion, the Wellbeing Promotion Committee, in consultation and collaboration with school staff and pupils, held a Wellness Week from the 2nd to 6th September 2023 to demonstrate our school's commitment to the promotion of wellbeing. Positive feedback received from staff and pupils will inform future actions and activities mentioned in our school improvement plan.

2. Findings

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

- Bullying is not tolerated at our school and the school is proactive and effective in preventing and tackling bullying.

- The school views health and wellbeing as important and promotes and encourages students to be physically active. Staff understand the link between physical activity and wellbeing and provide opportunities for physical activity and movement breaks for pupils.
- Adults offer praise and encouragement to children to work hard at school.
- The school has an ethos of respect and acceptance of difference, where all people are valued, and pupils feel that it is ok to be different.
- School staff are sensitive to confidential information about children that is shared between parents and staff.
- The school has links with external services for children in need of additional support.

2.2. This is how we know:

Questionnaires were completed by staff members, parents/ carers and pupils (1st- 6th Classes)
In the questionnaires, participants chose from options; Yes, Sometimes, No.

Pupil Responses:

- 86% of pupils said 'Yes' to the statement 'Bullying is not allowed at our school'.
- 93% of pupils said 'Yes' to the statement 'We are taught about bullying and cyber bullying and that leaving people out or teasing people is not allowed'.
- 90% of pupils said 'Yes' to the statement 'We learn that we are all special and that it is ok when people are different'.

Staff:

- 92% of staff said 'Yes' to the statement 'Staff understand the link between physical activity and wellbeing and provide opportunities for physical activity and movement breaks for pupils'.
- 87% of staff said 'Yes' to the statement 'The school is proactive and effective in preventing and tackling bullying'.
- 97% of staff said 'Yes' to the statement 'Staff collaborate with colleagues, parents and external support services as required to support pupils with additional needs'.
- 97% of staff said 'Yes' to the statement 'School policy promotes physical activity and opportunities for physical activity are provided'.

Parent/ Carers:

- 84% of parents/ carers agreed with the statement 'The school is committed to dealing with bullying and its prevention'.
- 90% of parents/ carers said 'Yes' to statement 'The school views health and wellbeing as important'.
- 94% of parents/ carers said 'Yes' to the statement 'The school promotes and encourages students/ pupils to be physically active'.
- 92% of parents/ carers said 'Yes' to the statement 'I feel that school staff are sensitive to confidential information that I share with them about my child'.

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

After extensive analysis of the data by the committee, multiple potential areas of need emerged.
The following is a sample of the data collected:

Questionnaires were completed by staff members, parents/ carers and pupils (1st- 6th Classes)
In the questionnaires, participants chose from options; Yes, Sometimes, No.

Pupils:

- 20% of pupils said 'Sometimes' to the statement 'I feel safe in school'.

- 3% of pupils said 'No' and 12% said 'Sometimes' to the statement 'If I do not feel safe, I know that I will be listened to and the adults in my school will help me'.
- 5% of pupils said 'No' and 10% said 'Sometimes' to the statement 'I know who to speak to in school if I am worried or sad about anything'.

Staff:

- 55% of staff said 'Sometimes' and 24% of staff said 'No' to the statement 'The school promotes positive relationships between pupils by supporting older pupils to lead in systems such as mentoring, buddy systems etc'.
- 40% of staff said 'Sometimes' and 24% said 'No' to the statement 'There are structures in the school which allow pupils to have a voice on issues relating to development and implementation of school policy'.

Parents/ Carers:

- 66% of parents/ carers said 'Sometimes' and 10% said 'No' to the statement 'The school communicates with me when things are going well for my child e.g. to acknowledge my child's progress and achievements in all areas'.
- 8% of parents/ carers said no and 11% said 'Sometimes' to the statement 'My child knows who to talk to in school if they have a worry or concern'.

Using the data collected, the committee referred to the 'Indicators of Success' and the 'Statements of Effective Practice for All' and 'Statements of Effective Practice for Some and a Few' relating to Key Area 4 'Relationships and Partnerships' in the Wellbeing Policy Framework.

While multiple potential areas of need emerged from the evidence gathered, one indicator of success was selected for prioritisation along with one 'Statement of Effective Practice for All' and one 'Statement of Effective Practice for Some and a Few' (see table below).

Key Area	No.4 Relationships and Partnerships
Indicator for Success	All adults in schools and centres for education have an increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing promotion, including listening to children and young people, and signposting them to internal and external pathways for support when needed. (DE, 2019 P46)
Wellbeing Statement of Effective Practice for All	Relationships and partnerships are supported through a range of agreed formal and informal structures, such as student councils, prefect systems, buddy systems, mentoring systems, assemblies, newsletters, student journals and through teaching and learning. (DE, 2019, P. 46)
Wellbeing Statement of Effective Practice for Some	Relationship building for children and young people who are experiencing difficulties can be achieved through a variety of initiatives including having a 'named staff member' allocated to the child/ young person to act as the 'one good adult'. (DE, 2019, P.47)

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 January 2024 to June 2024.

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
<p>Target 1: The Junior and Senior Classes will meet for a discreet planned social activity on two occasions per term.</p> <p>Week 22 Week 27 Week 31 Week 36</p>	<p>1a. A list of partnered classes will be provided to staff members.</p> <p>1b. Communication will be made with all staff members regarding the dates that social activities should take place. Team Leaders will remind team members the week before each scheduled activity.</p> <p>1c. The teachers of the partnered classes will plan a social activity. Suggestions for activities will be provided.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Promotion Committee Teachers SNAs School Leadership</p>	<p>Partnered Junior and Senior Classes will take part in the social activities on the designated weeks.</p>		
<p>Target 2: Pupils will be provided with an opportunity to meet at one school assembly with a focus on wellbeing promotion by the end of the school year.</p>	<p>2a. A Wellbeing Promotion Assembly will be organised through meetings of the Wellbeing Promotion Committee.</p> <p>2b. Topics relating to wellbeing to be spoken about at the assembly. will be selected. Topics may include gratitude,</p>	<p>Wellbeing Promotion Committee Teachers SNAs</p>	<p>Where appropriate, pupils will attend a Wellbeing Promotion focused assembly by the end of the school year.</p>		

	<p>mindfulness, showing kindness and respect.</p> <p>2c. Teachers and SNAs will be encouraged to explore the topics of discussion at the assembly in their classrooms following the assembly.</p> <p>2d. Classes will be invited to showcase work they are proud of at the assembly.</p> <p>2e. Achievements of pupils will be acknowledged and celebrated at the assembly.</p>				
<p>Target 3:</p> <p>The student council will work in partnership with the Wellbeing Promotion committee to seek opinions on the promotion of pupil wellbeing by meeting at least once a term.</p>	<p>3a. The Student Council will be asked for their thoughts and ideas on how the wellbeing of pupils can be promoted in the school through meetings with the Wellbeing Promotion Committee.</p> <p>3b. The Student Council and the committee will collaborate to decide and action appropriate measures to promote pupil wellbeing.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Promotion Committee</p> <p>Members of the Student Council</p>	<p>Members of the Student Council will have attended two meetings with the Wellbeing Promotion Committee. Their views will be recorded.</p> <p>An implementation plan will be made arising from their views in consultation with the committee with some actions to be undertaken by Term 1 of the 2024/2025 school year.</p>		

Target 4:

Any child in need of the support of 'one good adult' will be identified as the need arises and will be assigned a designated person on staff within two weeks.

4a. A Pastoral Care Team and associated support framework will be established.

4b. Team Leaders and Teachers will seek guidance and support from the Pastoral Care Team in relation to children/ families who might be considered 'at risk' and/ or in need of signposting to support services.

Pastoral Care Team
Teachers
SNAs



