



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan September 2023 to May 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope this letter finds you well. As the academic year comes to a close, we would like to take the opportunity to share with you information regarding our school self-evaluation and improvement plan. As part of our school self-evaluation and improvement process, we utilised surveys to gather feedback from staff and students, engaged in discussions with the Student Council, and collaborated with the PTA. These initiatives helped us identify our strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring that we continuously enhance our school's educational environment.

Teaching and learning are crucial aspects of our school's mission, and we have focused our evaluation on the following areas:

1. **Digital Learning:** Recognising the importance of technology in education, we updated our device strategy to align with current technological needs and educational goals. We provided Surface Pro devices to all full-time teaching staff and prepared for the introduction of 1:1 devices for a specific cohort of students. Moreover, we have made significant progress towards modernising the school website. A lot of work has been done in pursuit of this aim, and we are excited to share the updated site with you soon.
2. **Whole School Guidance (WSG):** We have made substantial progress in setting up a comprehensive guidance team and developing a whole school guidance plan. WSG refers to a school-wide approach to supporting students with their personal and social, educational, and career development. It recognises that all members of the school staff can play a supporting role. This initiative is aimed at providing consistent and effective guidance to all students, supporting their academic and personal development throughout their school journey.
3. **Wellbeing:** Our aim has been to promote good wellbeing among our students and foster inclusion and cohesion within the student body. This year, we introduced the Record of Bullying Behaviour form to enhance tracking and address bullying incidents. Additionally, we continued our involvement with Jigsaw's One Good School initiative and Dublin City University's Fuse Anti-Bullying programme, emphasising our commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all students. As part of our involvement with One Good School, we successfully organised a Cultural Diversity Day, celebrating the diverse backgrounds of our student body and promoting mutual respect and understanding.

4. School Self-Evaluation (SSE): The academic year 2023/2024 marks the beginning of the second phase of our SSE cycle for 2022-2026, with a focus on National Curriculum Goals – Wellbeing. Our primary aim this year was to strengthen our school's policy and planning in this domain, ensuring that wellbeing remains at the forefront of our educational strategies.
5. Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Our focus has been on embedding existing strategies and introducing new ones to enhance inclusivity. We've worked diligently to incorporate UDL principles into all schemes of work, ensuring that our teaching methods cater to the diverse needs of our students.

Moving forward, we have identified the following areas to work on:

1. Digital Learning: Our efforts to enhance digital learning will continue with the implementation of a 'one device per student' strategy for our incoming Form 1 cohort in 2024. Each student will receive a Lenovo 300w laptop managed for educational purposes, aligning with the objectives of the National Digital Strategy and our school's Digital Learning Plan. This initiative aims to ensure a high-quality and consistent digital learning experience for all students.
2. Whole School Guidance (WSG): We will continue to develop the WSG Plan. This will cover essential aspects such as Organisation, Guidance Programme, Student Support, Inclusion, Policies and Procedures, Psychometric Testing, World of Work, and Improvement Planning. This comprehensive development will enhance the coordination and delivery of guidance-related activities and support throughout the school.
3. Wellbeing: We are committed to enhancing the wellbeing of our students through targeted initiatives. In the upcoming academic year, we will focus on implementing wellbeing classes in both Junior and Senior Cycle, in line with the school's Wellbeing Policy. We will also continue and develop the Dublin City University's Fuse Anti-Bullying programme, and organise Wellbeing Week during the spring term of 2025. Additionally, we will commence a wellbeing promotion review, using the SSE process to initiate this review.
4. School Self-Evaluation (SSE): We are dedicated to the ongoing implementation of the second phase of School Self-Evaluation 2022-2026. Our focus on wellbeing will persist as we use the SSE process to initiate the aforementioned wellbeing promotion review. Additionally, we will explore the possibility of using SSE in the area of Whole School Guidance, further leveraging this valuable process for school improvement.
5. Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Our focus will be on fully embedding multiple strategies into classes and schemes of work, enhancing the inclusivity of our teaching methods and further supporting the diverse needs of our students.

To support our efforts and ensure the success of these initiatives, we kindly request your assistance in the following ways:

1. Discuss your child's education and progress with them regularly to maintain open lines of communication.
2. Support the implementation of the school's uniform, attendance, code of behaviour, anti-bullying, and AUP policies.
3. Return any forms of correspondence promptly to the school to ensure efficient communication.
4. Attend parent-teacher meetings to stay informed about your child's academic progress and engage in constructive discussions with their teachers.

By working together, we can create an environment that nurtures the growth and development of our students. We sincerely appreciate your ongoing support and commitment to your child's education.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We wish you and your child continued success and a wonderful summer break. Thank you for your partnership in our school community.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Murphy
SSE, SIP, and School Policy Coordinator
Sandford Park School

Information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education requires us to do.

School time and holidays:

The Department requires all post-primary schools to have **166 school days** each year, and a **28-hour school week**. This year we had **166** school days, from **24th August 2023** to **31st May 2024**. Our school week is **28** hours.

The Department sets out a **standardised school year and school holidays**.

This year we took all our school holidays within the permitted time. YES / ~~NO~~

The Department sets out arrangements for **parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**. This year we had **6** parent/teacher meetings and **7** staff/planning meetings, all in line with the Department's regulations.

Looking after the children in our school:

The Department requires schools to follow the *Child Protection Procedures* it has set down.

Our board of management has agreed in writing to do this. YES / ~~NO~~

All teachers know about the *Procedures*, and we have told all parents about them and how we follow them. YES / ~~NO~~

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Edith Byrne**, and our Deputy DLP is **Shane Keogh**.

Enrolment and attendance:

The Department requires schools to have and publish an admissions policy, to record and report attendance accurately, and to encourage high attendance and participation.

We have an admissions policy, and it is published. YES / ~~NO~~

We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy on: January 2023

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. YES / ~~NO~~

We encourage high attendance in the following ways: follow up on attendance with parents, recognise good attendance at prizegiving, encourage parents to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours and not to book holidays during term time.

This is how you can help: make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours (e.g., Wednesday afternoons), inform the school office of any absences, do not book holidays during term time.

Positive behaviour for a happy school:

The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour and asks us to consult parents/guardians and students about it. We do this. YES / ~~NO~~

Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. YES / ~~NO~~

We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school. YES / ~~NO~~