Loreto College, St Stephen's Green

School Self Evaluation Report
[Focus: reporting to parents]
September 2018 - 2019

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 **The focus of the evaluation**
A school based self-evaluation of reporting to parents was undertaken during the period September 2018 to April 2019. In September 2018 we agreed as a staff to trial comment-only feedback on school reports for first year parents and students. The focus of the reports was to emphasise students' improvements rather than their grades. Teachers were encouraged to report on (i) where the students were at in their learning and (ii) what they can do to improve in the future. The following report evaluates the progress of this trial.

1.2 **School context**
This school is an all-girls fee paying Voluntary Secondary school which offers the Junior Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate programmes to its students. The school has an open enrolment policy. Its feeder primary schools include the Loreto Junior School St. Stephen's Green and schools from a wide catchment area including parts of Meath and Kildare. Loreto College is one of eighteen secondary schools which the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto Sisters) runs in Ireland, north and south. The Loreto schools share a common educational philosophy and maintain links through inter-school co-operation and extra-curricular activities.

2. Summary of main findings

Based on student, parent and teacher survey

2.1 Strengths

Parents of First Year
- 82% of parents said that the feedback on their daughters comment-only report provided a good overview of her learning

- 92% said that the students were taking the feedback on board

- 80% believed that the reports helped the students to reflect on their own learning

Teachers

- 80% of teachers believed the trial on comment-only reports worked well

    The vast majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that

- students are paying more attention to the feedback their teachers are giving

- they are more often putting the feedback into action

- they are taking more ownership of their learning

- they are reflecting more on their own learning

Students
- 74% of first years said they took on board the feedback on their comment-only report
- 58% of students in the school generally (2nd to 6th year) focus on the comments with the grade when they get their school report

2.2 Areas for development

- 50% of parents who responded said that they would prefer to see some grade or level of attainment on the report
- 59% of students said they would prefer to see some grade or level of attainment on their report
- parents, teachers and students generally did not agree that student anxiety was reduced with more focus on improvements than on grades
- the majority of students said that they would welcome more opportunities to reflect on their own learning in school

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

- continue the trial of comment-only reports in first year for 2019/2020
- focus on strategies for writing comments within the JCT training day on reporting
- extend the trial into second year with the addition of general descriptors for attainment levels (e.g. Distinction, Higher Merit, Merit, Achieved, Partially Achieved) included on the second year reports
- review the running of Parent Teacher Meetings within the school
- develop teaching and learning strategies that help students to reflect on their own learning

The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

Appendix to Post-primary School Self-Evaluation Report: legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community

Which area of school life is involved?	What is the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?
Valid enrolment of students	Sections of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the conditions for students to be validly enrolled in a school	☒ Yes ☐ No
The school calendar and the school timetable	Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 167 days for all year groups	☒ Yes ☐ No
	Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school week - minimum of 28 hours for all year groups	☒ Yes ☐ No
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011 gives the dates for school holidays	☒ Yes ☐ No
Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings	Circular M58/04 sets out the arrangements for these meetings	☒ Yes ☐ No
Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy	Circular 25/12 describes the whole-school approach required by the strategy, and the implications for timetabling, assessment and reporting students' progress	☒ Yes ☐ No
Implementation of agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers	Circular 025/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 33 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time	☒ Yes ☐ No
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan	☒ Yes ☐ No
Engagement with school self-evaluation process	Circular 40/2012 outlines the SSE process and what it requires of schools	☒ Yes ☐ No
Guidance provision in secondary schools and whole-school guidance plan	Circular 09/2012 sets out the current arrangements for guidance planning and provision and refers to Section 9 of the Education Act 1998	☒ Yes ☐ No
Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes	Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05 set out the required provision for Civic, Social and Political Education	☒ Yes ☐ No
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94 sets out the conditions necessary for students to be exempt from studying Irish	☒ Yes ☐ No
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 65/11 and the Child Protection Guidelines oblige schools to ensure that: liaison persons have been appointed ; the procedures have been communicated to the whole school community; and the procedures are being followed	☒ Yes ☐ No

Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school	⊠ Yes ☐ No Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ⊠
Appeals in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension and expulsion (permanent exclusion)	Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for appeals procedures in these cases, which are dealt with first of all by the school. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.	⊠ Yes ☐ No Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ⊠

Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist – reporting to the school community

Policy	Source	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?
Enrolment policy	Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 obliges schools to have and publish an enrolment policy that respects the principles of equality and parental choice	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy	Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Attendance and participation strategy	Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of student attendance and participation in school life	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Health and Safety Statement	All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005)	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Data protection	School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on pupils should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Special education needs policy	Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of students with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available	⊠ Yes ☐ No
Social, personal and health education(SPHE)/Relationships	Schools are required by various circulars to provide SPHE in the junior cycle and RSE	⊠ Yes ☐ No

and sexuality education (RSE) policy	throughout the school, and to have policies to support this provision.	
Substance use policy	A Department directive and guidelines issued to schools in 2002 require schools to develop and implement a substance use policy in consultation with parents and students	☒ Yes ☐ No
Internet acceptable use policy	Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct students on safe and responsible use of the internet	☒ Yes ☐ No
Child protection policy	Circular 0065/2011 sets out requirements (see above for details of policy and implementation)	☒ Yes ☐ No
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91 requests schools to set up a parents' association, and promotes partnership between home and school	☒ Yes ☐ No
Deployment of special needs assistants	Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of schools	☒ Yes ☐ No