



School Improvement Plan

Introduction:

SSE is designed to be a collaborative, internal school review process that focuses on school improvement. Previous cycles of SSE have focused on Literacy & Numeracy (cycle 1) and Teaching & Learning (cycle 2). The third cycle of School Self-Evaluation (SSE) commenced in 2022 (Circular 0056/2022). It will run from September 2022 – June 2026.

The SSE process has evolved over the last 3 years to accommodate the realities of Covid-19 and the effect of the pandemic on schools. The commencement of cycle 3 was delayed, initially to September 2021 and then onto September 2022. During this period the work of SSE and school improvement continued in MSS.

In the 2021/22 academic year it was decided by the Principal and SSE co-ordinator to focus on 2 areas for SSE:

1. Consolidating and embedding previous strategies from cycles 1 and 2
2. Implementing a mechanism for peer assessment (following feedback from SELFIE)

Stages in SSE:

SSE Cycle 3 has been broken down into 2 main phases:

1. 2022-2023: Review year
 - i. Identify and reflect on the impact of Covid-19
 - ii. Initiate a wellbeing review and development cycle (by 2025)
 - iii. Take stock of the effectiveness of SSE to date
2. 2023-2026: School directed focus. Schools will have the autonomy to choose the focus of their SSE, subject to it addressing:
 - i. Context specific school priorities
 - ii. National well being goals
 - iii. National curriculum goals
 - iv. Other national strategies (e.g Digital strategy, Sustainable development)

Summary of main strengths:

Literacy and Numeracy:

Numeracy and Literacy have been addressed through the respective plans being implemented as part of SSE Cycle 1 and engagement with the Forbairt programme.



Teaching and Learning:

A range of strategies have been implemented as part of our focus on Teaching and Learning including engagement in TL21 2015-2017; Pilot strategy Differentiated Learning Outcomes and collaborative Practice. The use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques including 2 Stars and a Wish feedback. TY students have used e-Portfolios (using Google Sites) and a whole school approach to using PDF scans for uploading and online marking has been adopted. We have adopted the Google suite of Apps and Google Classroom as our digital ecosystem.

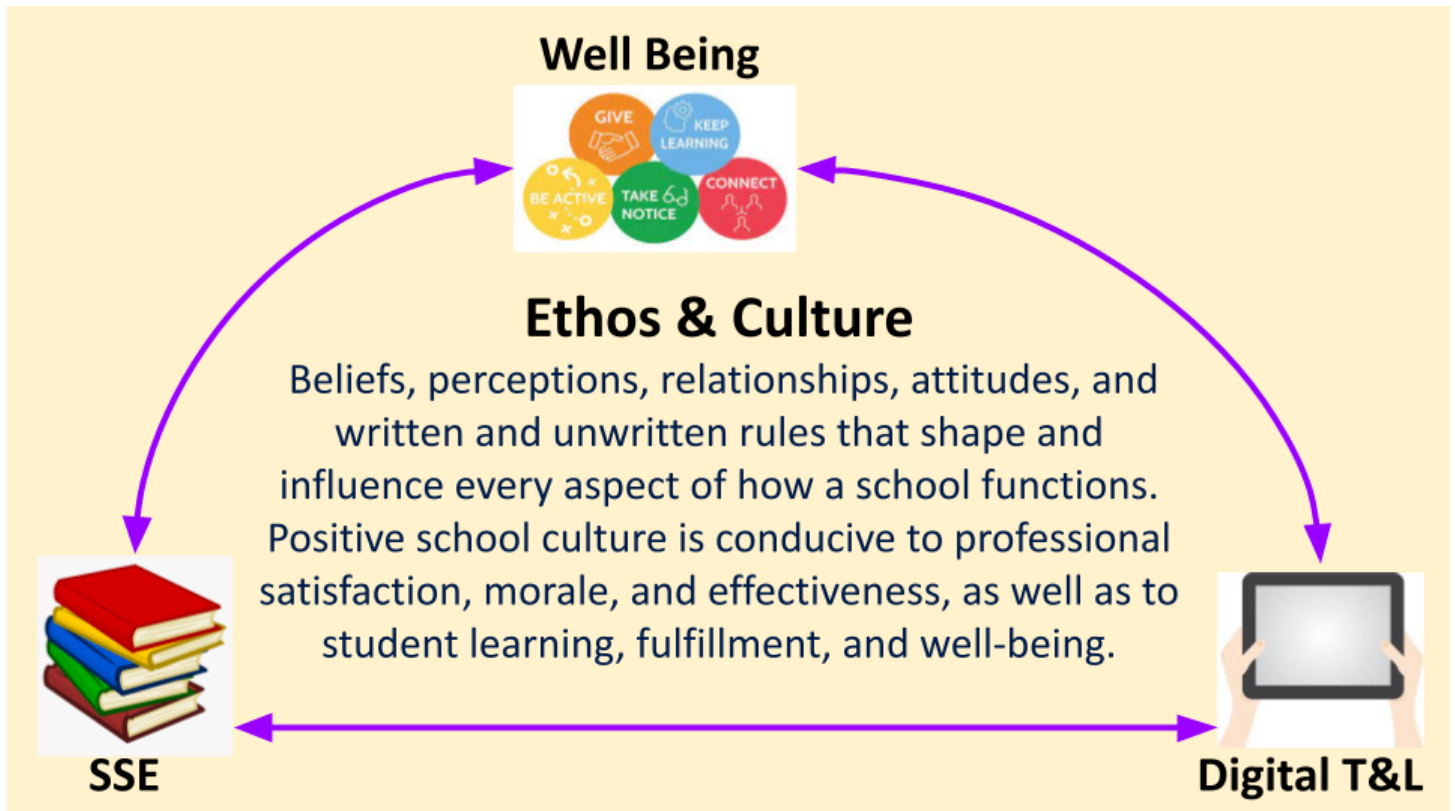
Wellbeing:

Wellbeing has been timetabled for a number of years now as part of the Junior Cycle reforms. In addition to this a number of whole school wellbeing initiatives have been undertaken including: The Show; Multicultural day; Fundraising Themed Days; School B-B-Ques; Induction for first years; FUSE Anti-bullying policy; Body Right; Best-Buddy Programme; Student award ceremonies and the welcoming and inclusive culture adopted by staff and students.

Areas for Development:

Data was gathered from both staff and students about the areas they thought could be developed as part of our SSE programme. Areas suggested included developing students capacity for independent and self directed study; a revisiting of the mind-mapping strategy from cycle 2; the use of revision strategies such as retrieval practice and the need for more in-house CPD delivered for staff by staff.

Current SSE Targets: Following our data gathering from staff at the start of the 2022-2023 academic year we have decided on 3 targets to focus on as part of our review year with a view to making them our whole school focus for the 2023-2026 stage of cycle 3. We are using the theme of Culture to overarch our SSE, Digital Teaching and Learning, & Wellbeing initiatives.



We choose the theme of Culture and later Ethos as we are striving to align the aspirations of our Ethos with the day to day reality of the school. Our Ethos is our standard of performance- this – ‘this is how we intend to be’. Culture on the other hand is the day-to-day reality.

Moving forward for 2023-2024

Target 1: Continuation of the Retrieval Practice strategy for the whole school

Target 2: Continuation of the Consolidation of Google Classroom as our VLE- CPD Delivery from staff

Target 3 Continuation of the : Digital Target: Project Logs to support project work-Considering shared calendar like CBAs

Target 4: Continuation of (Wellbeing)- Form committee

Target 5: Continuation of the Digital Target: Continue to Develop E Learning Logs on a whole school level for projects

Target 6: Teacher Peer observation to begin



Target 1: Retrieval Practice strategy (Pilot group)

Domain 2: Learner experiences

Standard: Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning

Domain 3: Teachers' individual practice

Standard: The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress students' learning





Actions necessary to meet the targets

- Completed ▾ Establish an SSE working group
- Completed ▾ Identify sample classes who will undertake the retrieval practice strategy in the Spring Term 2023
- Completed ▾ Generate baseline questionnaire for teachers and students involved in the pilot scheme and analyse results
- Completed ▾ Complete retrieval practice and supported revision activities (January - April)
- Completed ▾ Generate post strategy questionnaire for teachers and students involved in the pilot scheme and analyse results
- In Progress ▾ Feedback to staff (at staff meeting in May)

Recall / Revise / Recap / Retrieve / Repeat / Return / Review ★

Today's topic:

Choose from the following activities to organise your recalled information: [Timer](#)

<p>Brain Dump:</p>  <p>Create a mind map of everything you know in 3 mins, change pen colour and use last 2 mins to add from notes</p>	<p>Write 5 Q + A:</p>  <p>Write 3 short answer questions and 2 longer answer questions</p>	<p>Key word definitions:</p>  <p>Write a minimum of 5 key word definitions from this topic</p>	<p>Visualise the topic:</p>  <p>Include: a diagram with labels, annotate the diagram with as much information as possible</p>
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Review

This strategy was well received by students who participated in the pilot project (over



	90% found it useful as a classroom activity) with over 60% finding it had improved their recall upon retesting of revised material. Most students used the brain dump/mind mapping strategy for revision which linked back to our previous metacognition strategy from cycle 2. It has been decided to implement this as a whole school strategy next year following discussion at Staff Meeting (May 2023).
People responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR) - Pilot Group of Teachers & Students
Timeframe for action	December 2022 - May 2023
Success criteria	Qualitative and quantitative assessment of students, staff and Parents/Guardians to evaluate success. Evidence will be gathered via Google Forms surveys, feedback from teachers in focus group and from a focus group of students.
Review Dates	May 2023

Target 2: Consolidation of Google Classroom as our VLE

Domain 3: Teachers' individual practice

Standard: The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress students' learning

Domain 4: Teacher's collective/collaborative practice

Standard: Teachers value and engage in professional learning and professional collaboration

Standard: Teachers contribute to whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise

Actions necessary to meet the targets	<p>Completed ▾ Create a baseline survey to establish the current level of Google Classroom expertise and identify areas for in-house CPD.</p> <p>Completed ▾ Establish a group of Google Classroom experts who will be able to deliver in-house CPD to staff. Identify a novice group who are new to using Google Classroom (maybe generate a buddy system?)</p> <p>In Progress ▾ Identify staff who students feel are using Google Classroom in an efficient manner. Survey these students as to what features of use these teachers use to make Google Classroom function well. This will involve surveying students and focus groups to</p>
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	<p>discuss with staff and students why some things work and others don't.</p> <p>In Progress ▾ Develop a more consistent approach among staff to using Google Classroom (e.g. the use of topics, types of classwork, online grade book etc.)</p>
Review	<p>This strategy is in progress. Student feedback identified 2 clear actions to be undertaken by teachers to improve the ease of access when using Google Classroom on the iPad (renaming classes and archiving old classes). Teachers have identified their own level of competence when using the platform and 'expert' teachers will be leading our CPD in this area next year.</p>
People responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR) - Pilot Group of Teachers & Students
Timeframe for action	December 2022 - May 2023
Success criteria	<p>Qualitative and quantitative assessment of student & staff to evaluate success.</p> <p>Evidence will be gathered via Google Forms surveys, feedback from teachers in focus group and from a focus group of students.</p>

Target 3: Digital Target: Project Logs to support project work

Domain 2: Learner experiences

Standard: Students engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities

Standard: Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning

Standard: Students experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning

Domain 4: Teachers collective / collaborative practice

Standard: Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise

<p>Actions necessary to meet the targets</p>	<p>Completed ▾ Survey staff about digital teaching and learning (strengths and weakness)</p> <p>Completed ▾ Analyse results of staff survey and feedback to teacher (at staff meeting)</p> <p>In Progress ▾ Identify current strategies that are working well in project subjects - See</p>
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	<p>LC Geography project and JC Technology</p> <p>In Progress ▾ Survey staff and SNAs about what works well digitally to support AEN students with project work</p> <p>In Progress ▾ Add AEN teachers and SNAs to Google Classrooms for project work</p> <p>Not Started ▾ Teachers use a project log to identify actions taken as they progress through project work (as opposed to a stream of posts on Google Classroom)</p>
Review	<p>Different subjects have taken a different approach to LC project work (this is a situation that has evolved as more subjects come on-stream with projects).</p> <p>Upon review it has been found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The high level of digital competence (for most students) and iPad provision was helpful ● LC project work may benefit from some of the strategies in place for timetabling CBAs. ● Common submission date at the end of April was challenging for students with several projects. ● Support from the AEN department was invaluable for AEN students managing workload ● The provision of resources on Google Classroom supported students (although some had trouble navigating the Drive) ● The collaboration between staff and students was highlighted by students as being a positive aspect of project work <p>Overall, the planning and execution of project work at leaving cert requires a whole school approach. This will need to take account of digital resources available in the school. Additionally a time table to guide project work would be useful for both staff and students. With collaboration from subject departments we will be able to communicate this time frame at staff meetings in advance of the projects.</p>
People responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR) - Teachers with Projects as part of their subject
Timeframe for action	December 2022 - May 2023
Success criteria	Evidence will be gathered via Google Forms surveys, feedback from teachers in focus group and from a focus group of students.



Mercy Secondary School Ballymahon



Review Dates	May 2023
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Target 4: (Wellbeing) Taken from the Wellbeing Framework : Relationships and Partnerships- focusing on student and staff relationships, peer relationships, student voice, partnership between staff students, parents/guardians, partnership with other schools, community partnership and external support. **This is linked to our SSE overarching theme of Culture which is inclusive of our SSE Strategies, Wellbeing and our Digital Strategy**



<p>Actions necessary to meet the targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed ▾ Identification of Relationships and Partnerships as area of focus Completed ▾ SOAR Analysis. Strengths and Opportunities survey conducted with all Staff(December & January) Report on findings generated. Completed ▾ Curricular Wellbeing surveys designed, distributed and completed. Report generated on findings. Completed ▾ Individual Wellbeing surveys designed for all three stakeholders. In Progress ▾ Awaiting confirmation on release of Wellbeing Surveys Not Started ▾ Aspirations Staff Survey
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	Not Started ▾ Feedback to staff (at staff meeting? Or via email?)
People responsible	- Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR)
Timeframe for action	December 2022 - May 2023
Success criteria	Qualitative and quantitative assessment of students, staff and Parents/Guardians to evaluate success. Evidence will be gathered via Google Forms surveys, feedback from teachers in focus group and from a focus group of students.
Review Dates	May 2023

Target 5: Digital Target: Continue to Develop E Learning Logs

Domain 2: Learner experiences

Standard: Students engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities

Standard: Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning

Standard: Students experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning

Domain 4: Teachers collective / collaborative practice

Standard: Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise

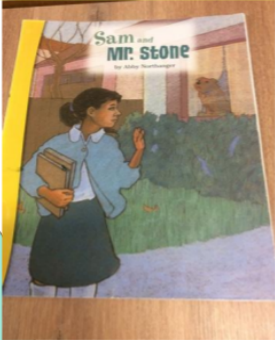

Review	<p>Our AEN Department developed E Learning Logs to record the work of the Students in each period during AEN. This was a valuable tool as students were responsible with the guidance of the teachers to update their learning log with an image of the work complete during the class, the strategies that were used to aid the students' learning and a review of the subject. This was further developed by a member of the Technology Department who delivered a presentation to our staff at a staff meeting about how their department has developed the learning log for their project work.</p> <p>Upon review it has been found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high level of digital competence (for most students) and iPad provision was helpful • LC project work may benefit from some of the structure in place for the learning logs. • AEN Department are continuing to encourage all teachers to keep update of the
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log.

- Teachers and students share the link with the AEN Coordinator.
- Using the log continuously allows staff to see what other teachers are working on with the student. This lends itself to greater collaboration between everyone.
- Our Students in the ASD Class have adopted this learning log to suit the needs of the students in the unit.

Overall, the use of the learning log for all AEN students requires a whole school approach. There is a sense that this template will be beneficial for a wide variety of subjects especially when completing project work. This Target will support Target 3 on Project work.

Teacher: Ms. Bruton		Topic: Literacy - Paired reading	
Name Strategies/Programme used NEPS page 54 Paired reading approach.	Teacher's Comments: I used paired reading approach with Donia. Donia is improving week by week with her reading skills.	Screenshot Of Work Done Today 	
Include Audio of Students Recap of work		Student Reflection:	

People responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR) - AEN Coordinator - AEN Teachers - ASD Lead Teachers - AEN & Technology Students
Timeframe for action	September 2021 - May 2023
Success criteria	Qualitative and quantitative assessment to evaluate success.
Review Dates	May 2023



Target 6: Teacher Peer observation

Domain 3: Teachers' individual practice

Standard: The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress students' learning

Domain 4: Teacher's collective/collaborative practice

Standard: Teachers value and engage in professional learning and professional collaboration

Standard: Teachers contribute to whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise

To Begin	Teachers have agreed at the last staff meeting that for 2023-2024 we will pilot teacher peer observation. It is proposed that staff will engage in a minimum of one peer observation and have a professional conversation afterwards as to what they found helpful. Teachers will be encouraged to follow guiding prompts that will help guide the discussion.
People responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wellbeing Leader (OC) SSE coordinator (FN) and Deputy principal (MOR)- Pilot Group of Teachers
Timeframe for action	September 2023-May 2024
Success criteria will be measured I	Qualitative and quantitative assessment of staff to evaluate success. Evidence will be gathered via Google Forms surveys, feedback from teachers in focus group and from a focus group of students.
Review Dates	May 2024