



## Summary of our Self Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan



F.C.J. Secondary School Bunclody is a co-educational school with a current enrolment of 1,004 students and 83 teaching staff. The school provides the Junior Cycle, an optional Transition Year Programme, The Established Leaving Certificate, and an optional Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

### Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

In the last year, August 2023 – June 2024 we have been implementing and monitoring strategies to improve our S.I.P. targets:-

**Target 1 Student Motivation To Learn**

**Target 2 Staff Wellbeing**

**Target 3 Communication Within Our School**

#### **1. Target 1 Student Motivation to learn**

##### **1.1 Pilot Project “Student Voice”**

- In Aug '23 the SSE committee invited all interested 5<sup>th</sup> Year teachers to be involved in a pilot project to evaluate and consider the effectiveness of harnessing student voice in the planning for teaching and learning.
- 19 teachers got involved in the project.
- Before implementing the pilot project we surveyed the students in each of the classes to ascertain what students already knew and understood about their own learning styles and behaviours.

- Teachers in consultation with their students implemented different strategies across a broad 5<sup>th</sup> year curriculum including languages, history, geography, business, sciences as well as practical subjects.
- The strategies implemented ranged from

Teacher Explanation	Investigative Learning
Pair Work	Group Work
Note Making	Feedback from Teacher
Hands-on approach	Studyclix Quizzes
Self-Assessment	Peer Assessment
Think Pair Share	Use of Technology
Must Should Could	Chapter/Topic Tests
Choice of Homework	Mind Maps
Class Tests	You Tube Videos
Experiments	Exam Papers

## 1.2 Introduction of Student Reflection Journal

- All 5<sup>th</sup> Year students (162) were required to complete a two page reflection Journal for each month of the academic year.
- Students were required to take greater ownership of and responsibility for their learning by reviewing their month's work and establishing targets for the following months.
- Students also were required to state the actions they had taken to catch-up on work from classes missed due to absence or extra-curricular activities.
- Feedback from teachers was provided monthly to all students on this work.

## Target 2 Staff Wellbeing

### 2.1 Bonding Day

- In Aug '23 we devoted two hours from our beginning of year staff meeting to team building and staff bonding.

## **Target 3 Communication in our school**

### **3.1 “Upcoming Events” on VShare**

- To improve the flow of communication between management and teachers about school activities (matches, assemblies, trips visitors, etc) which cause disruption to teaching and learning, management agreed to use the VShare dashboard to inform staff about “Upcoming Events”

## **4. SURVEY/ RESEARCH FINDINGS:**

### **4.1 Student Motivation to learn**

- 55% of students involved in the Pilot Project were aware of their dominant learning style.
- 61% of students had never been asked by their teachers about how they liked to learn.
- Students valued homework that involved testing understanding and/or application of material covered in class that day as well as practice of leaving cert style questions on topics covered.
- In April '24 we surveyed both teachers and students.
- 100% of teachers felt that the strategy implemented improved student motivation and participation in class.
- 63.6% of teachers felt that the strategy improved homework.
- 72.7% of teachers felt that the strategy improved test results.
- 100% of teachers were in favour of using student voice to frame teaching and learning in the classroom.
- 97.8% of students felt that the implemented strategy helped their learning in the subject.
- 95.7% of students felt that including student voice in teaching and learning was important.

## **4.2 Student Reflection Journal**

- When we surveyed the parents about the journal, 76% of respondents felt that the journal had helped their son/daughter to focus and better manage their studies.
- 90% of parents felt that we should continue to use the Reflection Journal.
- The SSE committee felt that we need to tweak aspects of the collection, correction and feedback of the reflection journal, so as to make it a less onerous task on the committee members.
- Through a focus group we learned that students valued the Journal which helped them to manage the demands of each subject better.

## **4.3 Staff Wellbeing**

- 82% of teachers felt that the team building exercise of Aug '23 were beneficial to creating a spirit of collegiality and friendship.
- 86% of teachers wanted team building to be a part of our return to school staff meeting in Aug/Sept.

## **4.4 Communication in our School**

- 96% of staff surveyed thought that the “Upcoming Events” posted by management on VShare was effective in improving communication flows within the school
- 100% of staff felt that the posting of “Upcoming Events” should continue on VShare.

**This is what we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:**

- We conducted teacher surveys.
- We conducted student surveys.
- We conducted Parent surveys.
- We conducted progress meetings with the SMT and the SSE committee.
- We held focus groups with students.

**This is what we are currently working on:**

- a. Continuing to embed formative feedback, differentiated homework and common standard of differentiated house exams.
- b. Continuing to support and encourage students as Independent Learners using our learning to Learn Module with 1<sup>st</sup> years and Reflection on Learning Journal with 6<sup>th</sup> years.
- c. Developing staff Wellbeing initiatives in the school.
- d. Enhancing the physical environment of our school for the wellbeing of the school community.
- e. Encouraging student motivation and engagement in learning.
- f. Improving communication and the flow of information within our school
- g. Continuing to pilot the effects of using student voice in teaching and learning.

**This is what you can do to help:**

- Encourage your son/daughter to achieve his/her potential in all curricular areas.
- Engage in conversations about their learning with your son/daughter.
- Read and discuss the feedback offered by teachers to your son/daughter in school reports.
- Encourage your son/daughter to reflect on the quality of their work and their level of effort and achievement.
- Engage in conversations with your son/daughter about goal setting, revision planning and reviewing performance/attainment.

Here is some information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education and Skills 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 25th August 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> 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**

The Department sets out arrangements for **parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**.

This year we had **6** parent/teacher meetings and **4** staff 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**

All teachers know about the *Procedures*, and we have informed all parents about them and how we follow them. **YES**

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mr Brendan Daly**

and our Deputy DLP is **Ms Una Osborne**

### ***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**

We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy on: **15th September 2020**

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. **YES**

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

**We have developed a supportive, positive learning environment.**

**We support and plan for the needs of the individual child.**

**We foster positive relations with parents and offer personalised support.**

**We reward full attendance at our Annual Awards**

**We acknowledge full school attendance (5/6 years) at our Annual Awards**

**This is how you can help:**

**Discuss with your son/daughter the value of regular school attendance.**

**Highlight to your son/daughter the disadvantages of missing classes.**

**Where possible organise medical/dental appointments outside school hours**

**Encourage your son/daughter to be punctual for school.**

**Contact the school if problems arise.**

**Positive behaviour for a happy school**

The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour and asks us to consult parents and students about it. We do this. **YES**

Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. **YES**

We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school. **YES**

**Our Improvement Plan**  
**Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026**

Targets	Actions	Persons /groups responsible	Criteria for Success	Targets achieved	Progress and adjustments
<p><b>Staff Wellbeing</b>            To design activities and organise speakers to promote staff wellbeing.</p>	<p>Organise staff Bonding activities at the beginning of academic year '23 –'24.</p> <p>Organise a suggestion box in the staffroom to encourage all members of staff to suggest ideas to promote teacher wellbeing in our school.</p> <p>Organise a speaker on staff wellbeing for Jan '24 Staff Meeting</p> <p>To establish fund raising to improve the environment of the school and facilities within the staffroom.</p>	<p>Ian Byrne            SSE Committee            Tomas Earls</p> <p>SSE Committee            Lucy Frend            Denise Nolan</p> <p>SSE Committee            Niall O Muiri</p> <p>SSE Committee            Parent Council            Tomas Earls            Justin Kelly</p>	<p>Teachers will feel valued and supported in their work in the school</p>	<p>August 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>January '24</p> <p>On-going from Nov '23</p>	<p>We will survey staff in May '24 to review our actions on staff wellbeing and to decide on future actions.</p> <p><b>Following staff feedback (survey carried out April '24) it has been decided that Staff bonding activities will happen September '24</b></p> <p><b>A Post of Responsibility has been created in our school for staff Wellbeing '24</b></p>



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<p><b>Student Motivation</b></p> <p>To improve student’s responsibility for and ownership of their learning</p> <p>To improve student motivation and commitment to their Learning</p>	<p>Introduce a reflective journal for all 5<sup>th</sup> Year students to allow students to reflect on their progress in all areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>Establish a pilot Project with 5<sup>th</sup> Year teachers to examine how student voice in teaching and learning could improve motivation and learning outcomes</p>	<p>All 5<sup>th</sup> Year Students            Parents            SSE committee            5th Year Deans            Assemblies</p> <p>5<sup>th</sup> year teachers            5<sup>th</sup> year students of those teachers            SSE Committee            Whole staff</p>	<p>Students will become more active and independent learners and will assume more responsibility for their own learning and be better able to reflect on future actions required</p>	<p>On-going from Sept '23 – May '24</p> <p>On-going from Sept '23 – May '24</p>	<p>Survey/focus groups to be completed at end of year by parents and students to measure effectiveness of action.</p> <p><b>Following feedback from parents teachers and students (April/May '24) we will continue both these strategies with the 6<sup>th</sup> year cohort in Sept '24</b></p> <p>Surveys and focus groups with students and teachers to review the pilot project May '24.</p>

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<p><b>Communication</b>            To improve the flow of communication in a timely manner from senior management to each member of staff to facilitate the smoother running of the school for all.</p>	<p>The principal will use the Dashboard facility on VShare to inform teachers about all planned events for the following week. This update will be done on the Friday of the preceding week.</p>	<p>Principal            SSE Committee</p>	<p>All staff will feel fully informed and better able to plan their lessons/educational activities etc</p>	<p>On-going throughout the year '23 – '24</p>	<p>In May '24 we will survey all staff to review this action</p> <p><b>Following the successful review of this measure by staff (April 24) we have decided to continue with the measure from Sept '24</b></p>